



Jno Baldwin Jr  
Baldwin, La. 1916













The Book-Lover's Library

Edited by

Henry B. Wheatley, F.S.A.



# BOOK-SONG

AN

ANTHOLOGY OF POEMS OF BOOKS AND  
BOOKMEN FROM MODERN AUTHORS

EDITED BY

GLEESON WHITE

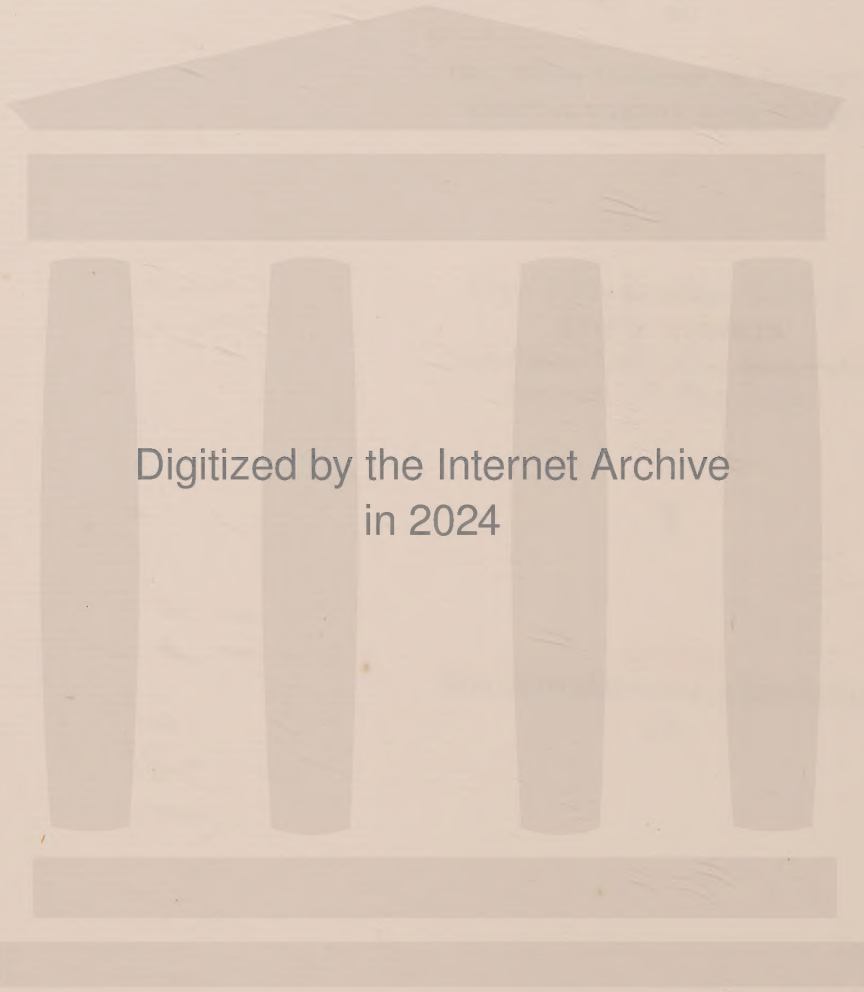
*Editor of "Ballades and Rondeaux," "Garde Joyeuse,"  
etc., etc.*



LONDON

ELLIOT STOCK, 62 PATERNOSTER ROW

1893



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TO  
RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

*Five years ago a promise lightly made  
Is claimed herein, as with a doubting pen  
I dedicate this sheaf of verse which then  
You bade me gather. But I, half afraid,  
Dallied, and loitered, and long while delayed ;  
Now Time has brought new idols to our ken,  
Anthologies no longer charm as when  
A lustrum since this garnering you bade.  
The English rose of song is not less sweet ;  
The petals borne from England oversea  
Delight us still ; but pulses slower beat  
To books than Life ; that volume which to me,  
Though torn and dog-eared, sadly incomplete,  
Holds one bright chapter headed "Memory."*

G. W.





## PREFACE.

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IT is not easy to discuss that love for books, which in some men is indeed wonderful passing the love of women, without quoting Charles Lamb. For he is of all later classics the ideal book-lover; one who adores not only their mental but their physical beauty: no mere æsthetic admirer, content to "worship from afar with distant reverence"; but one who must fondle his treasures. To gaze mutely, with a satisfied joy in being near enough to caress and abstain, is the secret of this type of book-lover, who must also be a reader and a student. Did not "Elia" wish to ask a grace before reading more than a grace before dinner? Now-a-days we are apt to forget either salutation; yet the thrill of pleasure an old favourite or a much-longed-for new book inspires, at times bursts into song. Your

lover has a habit of dropping into rhyme in a way which oftentimes, to be quite honest, does more credit to his devotion than to his culture ; even with a facile writer bathos waits nearer than pathos. The few eternal verities come with fatal ease ; and, vivid as they may be to the rhymers, fall somewhat tamely on a listener's ear. Therefore it would be rash to declare that all poems about books are worthy of their subject. Of course it may be urged that genuine emotion when too deeply felt ignores the self-criticism which mere artifice accepts gladly. But art has nothing to do with what the poet really felt ; whether he awakens the same feeling in his reader is the question. If forced to be so ungracious as to criticise a large class of bookish verse, one might own the evident sincerity of the singers, and yet wish at times that their very fervid praise had been more cautiously uttered. To dilate upon perfection is singularly non-exhilarating. "Too much chatter about books," according to Mr. Frederic Harrison, "chokes the seed which is sown in the greatest books of the world." We have been told that "lips sing

but when they cannot kiss." But this hardly holds true of bibliophiles, who might easily suppress the imminent poem were it not that the energy required to suppress a sonnet seems the hardest effort to-day. The sight of his beloved volumes brings to a poet's mind so many memories of joys tasted in secret, of wealth amassed in his treasure-house, that he is moved to a recital which shall provoke the sympathy—or envy—of his fellows.

This passion, acting on very different natures, is apt to excite very similar utterance. For instance, expressions of delight in the pleasure of possession, apart from the pleasure of study, might be quoted from Horace, or the ancients, or the latest rhymers. Richard de Bury, Montaigne, and the great cloud of witnesses Mr. Alexander Ireland gathers together in his "Book-Lover's Enchiridion," need but to be named in passing as proof of this well-nigh universal habit of joying in the ownership of the "dead bodies with living souls," those immortals who remain alway to mould the destinies of men, though creeds are forgotten and the gods themselves are dead.

Herein the classics both of our own country and foreign lands are left unquoted. To not a few people to-day—as indeed probably at any period—the voice of a contemporary has a certain charm no classic writer can offer. One may note such a taste without defence or apology, recognising that it is not unfit that the ephemeral trifles of the hour should enjoy their brief share of applause. To know the great ones of that past which is still the present, and to have communion with the “mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies skilled to sing of Time and Eternity,” holds nobler pleasures ; but those who have learnt the speech of the gods need not, swelling with pride, look down too severely on lesser mortals. That the colloquialism of their own time is the only utterance worth regarding, is an attitude more common than people generally care to admit ; and is especially the mood of a large class to-day. At times a stirring soldier-jingle by the creator of Tommy Atkins—or, with bated breath be it whispered, a Macaulay “Lay”—affects us more than “Lycidas,” or “The Sick King of Bokhara.” In most



cases sympathy with the subject attracts greater crowds than any triumph of art with a theme above them or outside their limit. So the angler will enjoy books on fishing, that would have been unspeakable to Dr. Johnson; a soldier will find delight in accounts of old battles, tedious and entirely devoid of the excitement of war as your civilian imagines it; possibly the book-lover may find praise of his idols vital and satisfying, even when lisped by faltering tongues. Yet at times poets—the unmistakable singers who move all hearts by their song—have found in books, as books, a worthy theme. It would be infelicitous to point out any poems in this collection to prove this statement; but when several come to mind, the doubt will arise whether by their side any mere verses, however graceful, should be permitted to elbow their betters; yet a catholic anthology must needs allow for wide variance in taste.

Here the anthologist has not endeavoured to include longer poems wherein a book is casually mentioned—nor, after the manner of the excellent Mr. Dodd in his “*Beauties of*

Shakespeare," to tear out isolated passages that fit his subject. Nor, since another hand is working on similar lines in older fields, has he ventured to include a single verse by an earlier—and hardly one by a dead—singer. The difference between the treatment of the subject by older lovers and those of to-day is more than mere fashion of phrase or choice of epithet. It seemed to be incumbent on the ancient swains to express their adoration with a fine courtesy that, stilted as it may sound compared with the easy, careless sentence of the hour—at least makes you feel the poet was very anxious to preserve his own dignity notwithstanding his pretended abasement. To be reverent and at the same time intimate is possibly difficult, but it is certainly the modern mood, and without exalting either school, it is easy to enjoy the servile adulation and grave deportment of the older poet, and yet admire the flippant or sentimental passion which inspires many a modern singer.

Naturally, were one hindered by no restraint, Mr. Andrew Lang would be one represented far more fully here: his felicitous

lyrics on the Rowfant Books, his raptures over Aldines, Boldonis and Elzevirs, his dirge on the fourpenny box—

“ And the tomes where divinity prances,  
And the pamphlets where Heretics roar,”

are regretfully omitted ; so, too, it was found impossible to include his cynically apologetic ballade—

“ Here’s Carlyle shrieking ‘ woe on woe,’  
(The first edition this he wailed in) ;  
I once believed in him—but oh,  
The many things I’ve tried and failed in !”

that so paradoxically touches on not a few of his many hobbies. But the chairman at a banquet should hesitate before expressing too deep regrets for absent guests, lest those present should feel the interest is being transferred to the others who have shirked the ordeal. So the rest of the noteworthy absentees were best left unnamed, but not unregretted, and by no means overlooked or wilfully slighted.

Poems to “my books,” in common with poems to “my mother,” are strangely alike in the thing said, however varied may be

the saying it. Friends that never tire, that can be scorned or dallied with, is an idea that recurs constantly. Raptures over rare editions, pæans on rare bindings, threnodies on forgotten masterpieces, form the staple themes of another, and as a rule a more neatly finished, class of verses. To find one's own ideas set forth in a new manner is the crowning delight to many readers. So, perhaps, we should not depreciate a number of poems on special volumes ; although, with some splendid exceptions, which it would be invidious to name, they are apt to reflect the rather commonplace bliss of their owners rapture. On the whole, those which treat of the externals are more satisfactory than those which consider them as literature. At times the pride of ownership becomes a little irritating, and seems deliberately worded to provoke jealousy ; but on second thoughts we remember the licence of a poet does not debar his imaginary possession of a few first folios, Aldines and Elzevirs, purely for the sake of the rhyme, or the sweet consonance of their syllables.

To apologise for a new anthology is but



one degree less sensible than to prepare it. Only those who have done so can realise the dismay at finding the quotation of some of their favourites forbidden by the owner of the copyright; and, if the truth may be said, at finding also that certain things dainty or charming in their original setting have, like too many a picture in a gallery, failed to preserve the effect which in the studio made them distinctly admirable. This, of course, must be attributed to the setting, and not to the jewel. A pearl of great price may lose part of its beauty between common crystals, sparkling in a way, but lacking the fire of the precious stone; on the other hand, a gem that in the pages of a periodical flashed out with a really brilliant polish, torn from its setting seems a thing of paste mechanically fashioned. Yet to apologise for an anthology might be pardonable in one way; for is not life spent in making collections to one's own taste—of friends—of opinions—of facts—and possibly of enemies? We all criticise our neighbours' anthologies; and at times our own, edited, as we would fain believe, with so much care and judg-

ment, and yet with so many mistakes and errors, whether lives or volumes of verse.

The appearance of this book, in spite of a collection of a similar nature being already in the field, needs a word of explanation. It was well nigh ready for press just before Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. Brander Matthews issued their "Ballads of Books"; hence its delay, hence too the regretted loss of many contributions from one of those admirable editors who touches all things so lightly and delightfully, that even a severe criticism on one's own ruder efforts becomes almost pleasant reading. Whether such a collection is ever desirable cannot obviously be discussed here with impartiality, because probably no one hates an anthology so viciously as he who has just failed in that attempt to make an ideal one which is inevitable to the task.

Very sincere thanks are due to a fellow-worker, Mr. William Roberts, who at the same time was preparing a volume of poems about books. He has generously contributed to this all the modern rhymes he had already selected; and in return the golden numbers

of past times that were to be herein have been handed over to him for a collection of earlier poetry on the same subject, which is to be its companion. It remains only to thank most cordially those authors, editors and publishers who have permitted quotation here. If, as must happen in matter collected from periodicals, including a quantity published in the United States, some items are wrongly ascribed, or some copyrights unintentionally ignored, the editor's most sincere apologies are offered. His chief fear is that permission asked and granted, in some cases so long ago as five years, may have faded from the givers' minds, although fresh still in that of the recipient. Why authors should almost invariably not merely give ready consent, but take no little trouble in the matter, is less easy to explain than to appreciate. But, as probably most editors of similar collections know, the sympathy and help from men whose time is most jealously guarded, turns what would otherwise be an arduous task to something that might almost be called a pastime, did not the etymology of that word recall the hours of proof

reading and of that "collation" which is by no means a slight repast, as the dictionary avers. Especial thanks must be given to Mr. Lewis Carroll, Mr. Austin Dobson, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, Dr. John Todhunter, Mr. A. C. Swinburne, Mr. Theodore Watts, Mr. Oscar Wilde, and others, for their courtesy and the interest they betrayed in the collection.

A last word of recognition is due to the various publishers who have so kindly endorsed the authors' permission to reprint the various numbers quoted herein ; among whom must be specially noted Messrs. Thacker & Co., the publishers of *Cherry Stones*, by Greece C. Dutt ; Messrs. Sonnenschein & Co., the publishers of *Minora Carmina*, by the late C. C. Rhys ; the editor of the *Oxford Magazine*, for "Reading" ; the editor of the *Cambridge Review*, for "A Plea for the Burial of Paley," and "Why cannot I Read To-night?" and many others, whose general consent has been so gracefully accorded.

GLEESON WHITE.

9, S. PETER'S SQUARE, W.





FRIAR JEROME'S BEAUTIFUL BOOK.

A.D. 1200.

THE Friar Jerome, for some slight sin  
Done in his youth, was struck with woe.  
"When I am dead," quoth Friar Jerome,  
"Surely, I think my soul will go  
Shuddering through the darkened spheres,  
Down to eternal fires below !  
I shall not dare from that dread place  
To lift mine eyes to Jesus' face,  
Nor Mary's, as she sits adored  
At the feet of Christ the Lord.  
Alas ! December's all too brief  
For me to hope to wipe away  
The memory of my sinful May !"  
And Friar Jerome was full of grief  
That April evening, as he lay  
On the straw pallet in his cell.  
He scarcely heard the curfew-bell  
Calling the brotherhood to prayer ;  
But he arose, for 'twas his care

Nightly to feed the hungry poor  
That crowded to the Convent door.

His choicest duty it had been :  
But this one night it weighed him down.  
"What work for an immortal soul,  
To feed and clothe some lazy clown !  
Is there no action worth my mood,  
No deed of daring, high and pure,  
That shall, when I am dead, endure,  
A well-spring of perpetual good ?"

And straight he thought of those great tomes  
With clamps of gold—the Convent's boast—  
How they endured, while kings and realms  
Past into darkness and were lost ;  
How they had stood from age to age,  
Clad in their yellow vellum-mail,  
'Gainst which the Paynim's godless rage,  
The Vandal's fire, could naught avail :  
Though heathen sword-blows fell like hail,  
Though cities ran with Christian blood,  
Imperishable they had stood !  
They did not seem like books to him,  
But Heroes, Martyrs, Saints—themselves  
The things they told of, not mere books  
Ranged grimly on the oaken shelves.

To those dim alcoves, far withdrawn,  
He turned with measured steps and slow,  
Trimming his lantern as he went ;  
And there, among the shadows, bent

*Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book.* . 3

Above one ponderous folio,  
With whose miraculous text were blent  
Seraphic faces : Angels, crowned  
With rings of melting amethyst ;  
Mute, patient Martyrs, cruelly bound  
To blazing fagots ; here and there,  
Some bold, serene Evangelist,  
Or Mary in her sunny hair ;  
And here and there from out the words  
A brilliant tropic bird took flight ;  
And through the margins many a vine  
Went wandering—roses, red and white,  
Tulip, wind-flower, and columbine  
Blossomed. To his believing mind  
These things were real, and the wind,  
Blown through the mullioned window, took  
Scent from the lilies in the book.

“ Santa Maria ! ” cried Friar Jerome,  
“ Whatever man illumined this,  
Though he were steeped heart-deep in sin,  
Was worthy of unending bliss,  
And no doubt hath it ! Ah ! dear Lord,  
Might I so beautify Thy Word !  
What sacristan, the convents through,  
Transcribes with such precision ? who  
Does such initials as I do ?  
Lo ! I will gird me to this work,  
And save me, ere the one chance slips.  
On smooth, clean parchment I'll engross  
The Prophet's fell Apocalypse ;

And as I write from day to day,  
Perchance my sins will pass away."

So Friar Jerome began his Book.  
From break of dawn till curfew-chime  
He bent above the lengthening page,  
Like some rapt poet o'er his rhyme.  
He scarcely paused to tell his beads,  
Except at night ; and then he lay  
And tost, unrestful, on the straw,  
Impatient for the coming day—  
Working like one who feels, perchance,  
That, ere the longed-for goal be won,  
Ere Beauty bare her perfect breast,  
Black Death may pluck him from the sun.  
At intervals the busy brook,  
Turning the mill-wheel, caught his ear ;  
And through the grating of the cell  
He saw the honeysuckles peer,  
And knew 'twas summer, that the sheep  
In fragrant pastures lay asleep,  
And felt that, somehow, God was near.  
In his green pulpit on the elm,  
The robin, abbot of that wood,  
Held forth by times ; and Friar Jerome  
Listened, and smiled, and understood.

While summer wrapt the blissful land  
What joy it was to labour so,  
To see the long-tressed Angels grow  
Beneath the cunning of his hand,  
Vignette and tail-piece subtly wrought !  
And little recked he of the poor

*Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book.* . 5

That missed him at the Convent door ;  
Or, thinking of them, put the thought  
Aside. " I feed the souls of men  
Henceforth, and not their bodies ! "—yet  
Their sharp, pinched features, now and then,  
Stole in between him and his Book,  
And filled him with a vague regret.

Now on that region fell a blight :  
The corn grew cankered in its sheath ;  
And from the verdurous uplands rolled  
A sultry vapour fraught with death—  
A poisonous mist, that, like a pall,  
Hung black and stagnant over all.  
Then came the sickness—the malign,  
Green-spotted terror called the Pest,  
That took the light from loving eyes,  
And made the young bride's gentle breast  
A fatal pillow. Ah ! the woe,  
The crime, the madness that befell !  
In one short night that vale became  
More foul than Dante's inmost hell.  
Men curst their wives ; and mothers left  
Their nursing babes alone to die,  
And wantoned, singing, through the streets,  
With shameless brow and frenzied eye ;  
And senseless clowns, not fearing God—  
Such power the spotted fever had—  
Razed Cragwood Castle on the hill,  
Pillaged the wine-bins, and went mad.  
And evermore that dreadful pall  
Of mist hung stagnant over all :

By day, a sickly light broke through  
The heated fog, on town and field ;  
By night, the moon, in anger, turned  
Against the earth its mottled shield.

Then from the Convent, two and two,  
The Prior chanting at their head,  
The monks went forth to shrive the sick,  
And give the hungry grave its dead—  
Only Jerome, he went not forth,  
But hiding in his dusty nook,  
“ Let come what will, I must illumine  
The last ten pages of my Book ! ”  
He drew his stool before the desk,  
And sat him down, distraught and wan,  
To paint his daring masterpiece,  
The stately figure of Saint John.  
He sketched the head with pious care,  
Laid in the tint, when, powers of Grace !  
He found a grinning Death's-head there,  
And not the grand Apostle's face !

Then up he rose with one long cry :  
“ 'Tis Satan's self does this,” cried he,  
“ Because I shut and barred my heart  
When Thou didst loudest call to me !  
O Lord, Thou know'st the thoughts of men,  
Thou know'st that I did yearn to make  
Thy Word more lovely to the eyes  
Of sinful souls, for Christ His sake !  
Nathless, I leave the task undone :  
I give up all to follow Thee—



*Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book.* 7

Even like him who gave his nets  
To winds and waves by Galilee ! ”

Which said, he closed the precious Book  
In silence, with a reverent hand ;  
And drawing his cowl about his face  
Went forth into the Stricken Land.  
And there was joy in heaven that day—  
More joy o’er this forlorn old friar  
Than over fifty sinless men  
Who never struggled with desire !

What deeds he did in that dark town,  
What hearts he soothed with anguish torn,  
What weary ways of woe he trod,  
Are written in the Book of God,  
And shall be read at Judgment Morn.  
The weeks crept on, when, one still day,  
God’s awful presence filled the sky,  
And that black vapour floated by,  
And lo ! the sickness past away.  
With silvery clang, by thorp and town,  
The bells made merry in their spires :  
O God ! to think the Pest is flown !  
Men kissed each other on the street,  
And music piped to dancing feet  
The livelong night, by roaring fires !

Then Friar Jerome, a wasted shape—  
For he had taken the Plague at last—  
Rose up, and through the happy town,  
And through the wintry woodlands, past

Into the Convent. What a gloom  
Sat brooding in each desolate room !  
What silence in the corridor !  
For of that long, innumeros train  
Which issued forth a month before  
Scarce twenty had come back again !

Counting his rosary step by step,  
With a forlorn and vacant air,  
Like some unshriven churchyard thing,  
The Friar crawled up the mouldy stair  
To his damp cell, that he might look  
Once more on his belovèd Book.

And there it lay upon the stand,  
Open !—he had not left it so.  
He grasped it, with a cry ; for, lo !  
He saw that some angelic hand,  
While he was gone, had finished it !  
There 'twas complete, as he had planned ;  
There, at the end, stood *Finis*, writ  
And gilded as no man could do—  
Not even that pious anchoret,  
Bilfrid, the wonderful, nor yet  
The miniatore Ethelwold,  
Nor Durham's Bishop, who of old  
(England still hoards the priceless leaves)  
Did the Four Gospels all in gold.  
And Friar Jerome nor spoke nor stirred,  
But, with his eyes fixed on that word,  
He passed from sin and want and scorn,  
And suddenly the chapel-bells  
Rang in the holy Christmas-Morn !

*A Ballade of Olde Bookes.* . 9

In those wild wars which racked the land  
Since then, and kingdoms rent in twain,  
The Friar's Beautiful Book was lost—  
That miracle of hand and brain :  
Yet, though its leaves were torn and tost,  
The volume was not writ in vain !

T. B. ALDRICH.



A BALLADE OF OLDE BOOKES.

THEY sing of the shadow-lands far away,  
The meads and the valleys of Acadie :  
Of haunts where the satyr and wood-nymph play,  
And of Pillars and Gates of Ivorie ;  
But none of these pleasaunces seems to me  
A haven of joy—for I'm growing old,  
And crave of Dame Fortune that I may be  
Where the second-hand books are bought and sold.  
I've haunted Brentano and John Delay,  
And toyed with their stories of France so free,  
At Putnams' and Scribners' from day to day  
I've flirted with Saltus and Roe (E.P.) ;  
But weary of all I have turned in glee  
To Bouton's murk shelves with their wealth untold.  
Yearning for Quaritch in Piccadilly  
Where the second-hand books are bought and sold.  
My pulses beat high and my heart is gay  
At finding a date that begins MD—  
On a sweet old izmo whose leaves are grey  
With booky " patina " of ancientric ;

And I kneel to the sage come o'er the sea,  
 That vandals may sell him for Yankee gold,  
 And gladly I part with my hard-earned V,  
 Where the second-hand books are bought and sold.

ENVOI.

Ah, Princess ! these glories shall live when we  
 Are dead, and our life-blood has long run cold,  
 For they are immortal—as you may see,  
 Where the second-hand books are bought and sold.

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN.



A BALLAD OF AUTHORS AND BOOKS.

I N the coves of the Island of Treasure,  
 On the tropical Beach of Falese,  
 I have taken unlimited pleasure,  
 Wafted there by a favouring breeze.  
 I have lingered with Lang and his Bookmen,  
 I have Gossiped the day long with Gosse,  
 But have wearied of Stead and his spook-men,  
 And have steadfastly wished for their loss.

I have studied Vanbrugh and Pinero,  
 Ford and Webster, Kit Marlowe and Jones ;  
 Whilst, to me, Oscar Wilde was a hero,  
 With his wittily cynical tones :  
 But, so long as "A Doll's House" the craze is,  
 I am sure that the public might see,  
 If they wish for a play that amazes,  
 They can get one much better from me.

*The Book I've Read Before.* 11.

I have shared in each joy and each sorrow  
Of the garrulous "Warriors Three,"  
I have travelled in Spain with George Borrow,  
I have tasted the Autocrat's tea,  
I have listened to Barrie's sweet "Thrumming,"  
And enjoyed "Lady Windermere's Fan,"  
But I think of the writer who's coming,  
And I wonder if I am the man.

G. B.



THE BOOK I'VE READ BEFORE.

I HEAR of many a "latest book";  
I note what zealous readers say;  
Through columns critical I look,  
With their decisive "yea" and "nay"!  
At times I own I'm half inclined  
O'er some new masterpiece to pore;  
Yet in the end I always find  
I choose the book I've read before!

Its well-known contents suit my taste,  
I know what it is all about;  
And so I never am in haste  
To find "how it is coming out."  
But quietly I wend my way:  
O'er each familiar scene I pore—  
The bright, the dark, the grave, the gay—  
Of that old book I've read before.

Then worry not, my puzzled friend :  
 I'm odd, I own ; and so while you  
 Your way through countless volumes wend,  
 Entranced with each, so "late" and "new,  
 Be not surprised that I, meanwhile,  
 Avoiding new ones by the score, \*  
 Full many a passing hour beguile  
 With some old books I've read before !

And if, perchance, the hint you take  
 To shun the new, and read the old ;  
 And find, surprised, the change you make  
 Reveals new beauties, all untold :  
 'Twill surely duplicate my joy  
 While o'er the old I fondly pore,  
 When you with me find sweet employ  
 In some old book we've read before.

CHARLES R. BALLARD.



AN UNCUT COPY.

WHEN I was young I sent my friend a copy  
 of "My Verses,"  
 And when he died he left his books to me, dear  
 to his heart.  
 To-day I looked them over all, and find—ten  
 thousand curses !—  
 My book is there, and no two leaves have e'er  
 been cut apart.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.



## AN INCONSISTENCY.

THE bibliophile who loves his margins wide—  
 Who grudges e'en to type an inch or two—  
 Most strangely has not ever stepped aside  
 To read with glee a virgin blank-book through.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.



## THE GRANGERITE.

HE says he's fond of books as of himself—  
 This man who never yet has hesitated  
 To hack and cut a dozen books for pelf  
 Wherewith *one* may be extra-illustrated !

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.



## AN ALTERNATIVE.

THERE'S Byron on my shelf, and Shelley too ;  
 There's dear old Doctor Holmes, and Thomas  
 Moore,  
 With Wordsworth just below him, bound in blue,  
 And Browning's works stand over by the door.  
 There's Milton, Scott, Macaulay's Lays of Rome ;  
 There's Tennyson and Matthew Arnold terse ;  
 Longfellow, Shakespeare, and Rossetti's tome ;  
 The odes of Horace and blest Omar's verse.

So vast these riches are in my poor eyes,  
 I can't decide which poet on my shelf  
 I'll read to-night, and so I'll compromise  
 And read these "Rhymes" in full calf by myself.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

## PHILOSOPHIC OBSCURITY.

ESSAYS and novels and poems I've penned,  
 Autobiographies, histories three,  
 Jokelets and verses, and such without end,  
 Letters of travel on land and on sea.

No one has seen them, and see them none may ;  
 Locked in my closet the manuscripts lie,  
 Sealed with instructions to fire the day,  
 Distant or present, on which I die.

Fame I care naught for, and fortune is mine,  
 Hence under lock and key let the lines rest.  
 Why should I give the world one single line—  
 World that has often neglected the best ?

Why should I drive them, offspring of my brain,  
 Into the world with its critics severe ?  
 Why should I seek for the woe and the pain  
 Certain to follow the theorist's leer ?

No ! I will keep them : unread let them lie ;  
 Then when I pass through Death's mystieried  
 portal,

How 'twill console me, reflecting, that I  
 Could, had I chosen, have been an immortal !

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.



## A LITERARY SOLUTION.

WE stood in the bookstore together,  
 She chatting of this and of that ;  
 My heart kept time with the feather  
 That clung to her Gainsborough hat.

On Stevenson, Stockton and Kipling,  
And poets galore she enthused ;  
But how to propose to her, rippling  
With music and laughter, I mused.

On this one and that one she tarried  
To label their place on the shelf ;  
This " How to be Happy, Though Married " :  
" Absurd ! " and I thought so myself.  
" But those who have tried it may surely  
Be trusted to know," I replied.  
" I tell you," she said, " it is purely  
The tone of the age to deride."

" The task for solution," I ventured,  
" Is how to be married, though poor "—  
I know that I ought to be censured,  
She looking so sweet and demure.  
Her voice was so low, 'twas the border  
Of thought where it breaks into word :  
" We might," she said, " solve this, in order  
To prove that the book is absurd."

CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON.



TO AN OLD BOOK.

OLD book forlorn, compiled of ancient thought,  
Now bought and sold, and once more sold  
and bought,  
At last left stranded, where in time I spied,  
Borne thither by an impecunious tide ;

Well thumb'd, stain-mark'd, but new and dear to  
 me,  
 My purse and thy condition well agree.  
 I saw thee, yearned, then took thee to my arms,  
 For fellowship in misery has charms.  
 How long, I know not, thou hadst lain unscanned,  
 Thy mellow leaves untouched by loving hand—  
 For there thou wast beneath a dusty heap,  
 Unknown. I raised thee, therefore let me reap  
 A harvest from thy treasures. Thee I found—  
 Yea, thee I'll cherish ; though new friends abound,  
 I'll still preserve thee as the years go round.

EDGAR GREENLEAF BRADFORD.



#### THE BIBLIOPHILE.

THE lover may rave of his ruddy-cheeked lass,  
 The sailor may sing of the sea ;  
 And toppers may tell of the charms of the glass,  
 But Books have more beauty for me.

A book is a treasure more precious than gold ;  
 An heirloom bequeathed to mankind ;  
 A casket of wisdom in which we behold  
 The kingliest gems of the mind.

Though humble my lot, yet dull care I defy,  
 With books for my gentle allies ;  
 And folly and vice from my presence will fly  
 When I think of the good and the wise.

*A Bookworm.* . 17

My books shall supply me with balm for each blow,  
When fortune my best effort spurns ;  
With Swift I will laugh at the high and the low,  
And mourn o'er a "mousie" with Burns.

While sitting at ease by my own fireside,  
A famous old Book on my knee,  
A lover alone with his beautiful bride  
Would win little envy from me.

My heart feels at peace as through Book-world I  
roam,  
The fair realms of fancy are mine,  
And Love's holy spirit now rests on my home—  
My book is the Volume Divine.

ALFRED C. BRANT.



A BOOKWORM.

TIME-EATEN, like his books, and worn  
With teen and strong endeavour,  
Pure heart, flame burning ever,  
Whence lofty thought and verse were born,  
With lamp-lit toil he met the morn.

And wealth bequeathed by ages old  
Stood round him piled, enshelved,  
Wherein he nightly delved,  
Nor paused when grey was smitten gold,  
Nor shuddered though the morn blew cold.

The Past was servitor to him ;  
His genius robed in learning,  
His wages fame for earning,—  
Fame seen afar, with eyeballs dim,  
Fame cheaply bought by life or limb.

Yet men who dig for gold despise  
Those lean hands godless delving,  
That patience slow uphelving  
Mysterious glories for their eyes,  
Who sneering deem his prize no prize.

They, perched on money-bags, supreme,  
Behold him but with scorning,  
Grip gold all night ; the morning  
Breaks with a chill, sarcastic gleam  
The pelf and profits of their dream.

Sleek fed they travel towards their end,  
Their joys gold-built, their troubles,  
The wreck of gilded bubbles.  
In sight of that towards which we tend  
They crawl to wealth, for heirs to spend.

But he, sad-eyed and ashy-cheeked,  
When slips the pen from grasping,  
Sees, as he struggles, gasping,  
With fame the far horizon streaked  
Behind Death's raven gory-beaked.



*Assignment of Binders.* 19

Last, when, his final task complete,  
He sat, sat as he perished,  
Amid the love he cherished,  
They say who pierced his lone retreat  
That angel pinions swept their feet.

A beauteous fabric perfect wrought,  
His days were spent in framing,  
Lives, blooms to utter shaming  
The fools who spurned his toil, and thought  
Fame, like their Consols, might be bought.

Sad reverent steps and hearts are ours,  
When to his tablet bringing  
Grief, awe, and love upspringing,  
And little care we, scattering flowers,  
Where riches' gilded obelisk towers.  
J. J. BRITTON.



THE BIBLIOMANIAC'S ASSIGNMENT OF  
BINDERS.

IF I could bring the dead to-day,  
I would your soul with wonder fill  
By pointing out a novel way  
For bibliopegistic skill.

My Walton, Trautz should take in hand,  
Or else I'd give him o'er to Hering ;  
Matthews should make the Gospels stand  
A dateless warning to the erring.

The history of the Inquisition,  
With all its diabolic train  
Of cruelty and superstition,  
Should fitly be arrayed by Payne.

A book of dreams by Bedford clad,  
A papal history by De Rome,  
Should make the sense of fitness glad  
In every bibliomaniac's home.

As our first mother's folly cost  
Her sex so dear, and makes men grieve,  
So Milton's plaint of Eden lost  
Would be appropriate for Eve.

Hayday would make "One summer" be  
Much more attractive to the view ;  
While General Wolfe's biography  
Should be the work of Padeloup.

For lives of dwarfs like Thomas Thumb  
Petit's the man by Nature made,  
And when Munchausen strikes us dumb  
It is by means of Gascon aid.

Thus would I the great binders blend  
In harmony with work before 'em,  
And so Rivière I would commend  
To Turner's "Liber Fluviorum."

IRVING BROWNE.

HOW A BIBLIOMANIAC BINDS HIS  
BOOKS.

I'D like my favourite books to bind  
So that their outward dress  
To every bibliomaniac's mind  
Their contents should express.

Napoleon's life should glare in red,  
John Calvin's life in blue ;  
Thus they would typify bloodshed  
And sour religion's hue.

The prize-ring record of the past  
Must be in blue and black ;  
While any colour that is fast  
Would do for Derby track.

The Popes in scarlet well may go ;  
In jealous green, Othello ;  
In grey, Old Age of Cicero,  
And London Cries in yellow.

My Walton should his gentle art  
In salmon best express,  
And Penn and Fox the friendly heart  
In quiet drab confess.

Statistics of the lumber trade  
Should be embraced in boards,  
While muslin for the inspired Maid  
A fitting garb affords.

Intestine wars I'd clothe in vellum,  
 While pig-skin Bacon grasps,  
 And flat romances such as "Pelham"  
 Should stand in calf with clasps.

Blind-tooled should be blank verse and rhyme  
 And prose of epic Milton ;  
 But Newgate Calendar of Crime  
 I'd lavishly dab gilt on.

The edges of a sculptor's life  
 May fitly marbled be,  
 But sprinkle not, for fear of strife,  
 A Baptist history.

Crimea's warlike facts and dates  
 Of fragrant Russia smell ;  
 The subjugated Barbary States  
 In crushed Morocco dwell.

But oh ! that one I hold so dear  
 Should be arrayed so cheap  
 Gives me a qualm ; I sadly fear  
 My Lamb must be half-sheep !

IRVING BROWNE.



THE BOOKWORM DOES NOT CARE FOR  
 NATURE.

I FEEL no need of nature's flowers—  
 Of flowers of rhetoric I have store ;  
 I do not miss the balmy showers—  
 When books are dry I o'er them pore.

Why should I sit upon a stile  
And cause my aged bones to ache,  
When I can all the hours beguile  
With any style that I would take?

Why should I haunt a purling stream,  
Or fish in miasmatic brook?  
O'er Euclid's angles I can dream,  
And recreation find in Hook.

Why should I jolt upon a horse  
And after wretched vermin roam,  
When I can choose an easier course  
With Fox and Hare and Hunt at home?

What if some vicious bull were loose,  
Or fractious cow pursue my path?  
A tamer Bulwer I would choose,  
A Cowper destitute of wrath.

Why should I watch the swallows flit,  
And run the risk of butting ram?  
A Swift upon my shelves Hazlitt,  
I need not run from waggish Lamb.

Why should I scratch my precious skin  
By crawling through a hawthorn hedge,  
When Hawthorne, raking up my sin,  
Stands tempting on the nearest ledge?

No need that I should take the trouble  
To go abroad to walk or ride,  
For I can sit at home and double  
Quite up with pain from Akenside.

IRVING BROWNE.

## A LESSON IN LATIN.

OUR Latin books, in motley row,  
 Invite us to the task—  
 Gay Horace, stately Cicero ;  
 Yet there's one verb, when once we know,  
     No higher skill we ask :  
 This ranks all other lore above—  
 We've learned "amare" means "to love !"  
 So hour by hour, from flower to flower,  
     We sip the sweets of life ;  
 Till, ah ! too soon the clouds arise,  
 And knitted brows and angry eyes  
     Proclaim the dawn of strife.  
 With half a smile and half a sigh,  
 "Amare ! Bitter One !" we cry.  
 Last night we owned, with looks forlorn,  
     "Too well the scholar knows  
 There is no rose without a thorn—"  
 But peace is made ! We sing, this morn,  
     "No thorn without a rose !"  
 Our Latin lesson is complete ;  
 We've learned that Love is "Bitter-sweet !"

LEWIS CARROLL.



## TO A BOOKWORM.

THOU patient grub, that through this volume  
     old  
 Thy labyrinthine way hast bored—  
 Not for the wealth of wisdom stored  
 Between its oaken lids—not for the bold

And soaring rancy—not or the gold  
 Of human sympathy outpoured,  
 Like treasures from some secret hoard,  
 Upon its ample pages stained with mould :  
 Ah no ! a baser appetite was thine ;  
 Yet in the scope of nature's plan  
 Thy purpose thou hast served ; the man  
 Who built this noble volume line by line,  
 Served but the same—no more—in his degree ;  
 Divine the hand in both alike I see.

T. J. CHAPMAN.



MY BOOKS.

MY books—a ragged lot are they,  
 Like Falstaff's men at Shrewsbury—  
 A sight to make a critic merry !  
 And yet to me each dingy book  
 Appeals with such a friendly look,  
 To part with them I shall not hurry.  
 My Goldsmith's muslin coat is torn ;  
 My Boswell I have clothed in cotton ;  
 Old Samuel's leather suit is rotten ;  
 Macaulay's page is marked with grime  
 Beyond my power to tell in rhyme,—  
 Perhaps it *might* be Hottentot in.  
 I've read Sir Walter to the core,—  
 His volumes now are somewhat tattered ;  
 My Shakspeare too is somewhat battered ;  
 My poets all—Burns, Byron, Keats,  
 Poe, Coleridge—I have sucked their sweets  
 And left the calyx somewhat shattered.



A double preciousness to me  
 Do these old dingy books discover ;  
 As hawthorn tree reminds the lover  
 Of pleasant hours long passed away,  
 When here he sat with darling May,  
 While shone the evening star above her ;

Even so the sight of these old books  
 My oft-despondent heart rejoices ;  
 I hear again long-silent voices ;  
 The quiet nook, the grassy lane,  
 The shining stream I see again,  
 While white-winged peace above me poises.

T. J. CHAPMAN.



OLD BOOKS ARE BEST.

OLD Books are best ! With what delight  
 Does "Faithorne fecit" greet our sight  
 On frontispiece or title-page  
 Of that old time, when on the stage  
 "Sweet Nell" set "Rowley's" heart alight !

And you, O Friend, to whom I write,  
 Must not deny, e'en though you might,  
 Through fear of modern pirates' rage,  
 Old Books are best.

What though the prints be not so bright,  
 The paper dark, the binding slight ?  
 Our author, be he dull or sage,  
 Returning from a distant age  
 So lives again. We say of right :  
 Old Books are best.

BEVERLY CHEW.

## OF MY BOOKS.

A ROUND the narrow circuit of the room  
 Breast-high the books I love range file on  
 file ;

And when, day-weary, I would rest awhile,  
 As once again slow falls the gathering gloom  
 Upon the world, I love to pass my hand  
 Along their serried ranks, and silent stand  
 In breathless heark'ning to their silent speech.  
 With rev'rent hand I touch the back of each  
 Of these my books. How much of their dear  
 selves—

The hand that held the pen, the brain that  
 wrought

The subtle fancies on these pages caught—  
 Have men immortal left upon my shelves !

And then sometimes a sudden chill doth strike  
 My heart with very horror, and I shrink  
 Away from their dull touch, shudd'ring to think  
 How much of human life that, vampire-like,  
 These books have sucked beneath their leathern  
 wings,

How brains have broken and frail bodies bent  
 To feed with human blood these bloodless things.

In this thin book of poesy is pent  
 A beautiful young life ;—imperial Rome  
 Holds what was mortal of it. Then I see,  
 All withered at the top, a noble tree  
 Here in the scathing scorn of this dark tome.

By this long line of books that mutely stands  
 A master-mind was wrecked, so that in years  
 He sat a poor old man in dotting tears,  
 Because his dogs in pity licked his hands.

But then again there comes a rushing thought,  
 And to my *living* books my arms I raise  
 In loving fellowship of life and breath,  
 And, like poor Southey when his brain was naught  
 Save a pale glimmering light of other days,  
 I touch them tenderly. My spirit saith :  
 "Who gave their lives for these can know no  
 death.

For I have walked with them in mortal guise  
 Through woodland ways and swarming city  
 streets ;

Yea, have I met the gaze of Shelley's eyes,  
 And in 'Hyperion' kissed the lips of Keats."

CHARLES WASHINGTON COLEMAN.



A BOOK BY THE BROOK.

GIVE me a nook and a book,  
 And let the proud world spin round ;  
 Let it scramble by hook or by crook  
 For wealth or a name with a sound.  
 You are welcome to amble your ways,  
 Aspirers to place or to glory ;  
 May big bells jangle your praise,  
 And golden pens blazon your story :

For me, let me dwell in my nook,  
Here by the curve of this brook,  
That croons to the tune of my book.  
Whose melody wafts me forever  
On the waves of an unseen river.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.



MY BOOKCASE.

HOW many volumes do I miss !  
I wish, among folks' duties,  
That they would rank returning books.  
But those morocco beauties  
Are never touched except by me,  
And really, though I know it's  
A shame, I do rejoice to think  
That no one borrows poets.

To those lost books my fancy clings,  
O'er them my memory grovels,  
I swear in spirit when I see  
The gaps among the novels.  
The Thackeray I "loved and lost"  
I mourn with sorrow tender,  
Whoever has it also has  
The curses of the lender.

The second shelf I frankly own  
A motley, queer collection,  
Half-filled with grave philosophers,  
In spite of Kant's defection.

But Calverley and Kingsley sit  
Tucked in among the Germans,  
And "Ouida" snugly nestles next  
My only book of sermons.

Spencer keeps cheerful company  
With "How I caught a Tartar,"  
Near them the book I treasure most,  
My well-belovèd "Sartor."  
Montgomery by Macaulay stands,  
The scorned beside the scorner,  
And dear Mark Twain with Rabelais  
Is chatting in the corner.

Homer ! This same old copy shone,  
Star of my childish vision ;  
To read it for myself was once  
The height of my ambition.  
Full fifteen years ago I made  
That blot upon the binding,  
Trying to print my name in Greek,  
And difficulty finding.

Dear books ! you answer questioning  
Without a why or wherefore.  
Our friendship never had a jar ;  
You seem to know and care for  
The tender touches that I give  
To every well-worn cover,  
And as I love you, friends of mine,  
I could not love a lover.

BESSIE CRAIGMYLE.

“WHY CANNOT I READ TO-NIGHT?”

WHY cannot I read to-night? Because  
 Fair Silvia's eyes have smitten me through  
 Or visions of boating make me pause  
 As I read of the pranks of a trireme's crew?—  
 But I care for Silvia not two straws,  
 I always thought her mouth was askew;  
 A landsman I who grudge the applause  
 Those saucy aquatics deem their due.

Then say, why cannot I read to-night?  
 Do I dream of a face that I loved at school?  
 Of the hour that suddenly reft its light,  
 That took the genius, left the fool?—  
 Ah, no, if I read my case aright,  
 The past is dead in my torpid brain:  
 When I lost whate'er made existence bright,  
 I lost the pleasure of feeling pain.

Am I haunted by echoes of J. K. S.?  
 Or the jocund carols of C. S. C.?  
 Enslaved to the Lady of Lyonesse,  
 Or out on a frolic with soldiers three?  
 But not *my* soul did the Muses bless  
 With a love of the lyre—not to mention the liar—  
 Pray pardon me, Rudyard; romance, I guess,  
 Can strike from my dulness no spark of fire.

Why cannot I read to-night, then, why?  
 Found at last—more worth than some deep under  
     ground hoard,  
 —That villain next door's making melody  
 On banjo—three strings snapped and hole in the  
     sound-board.

W. D.

## IN A LIBRARY.

A PRECIOUS mouldering pleasure 'tis  
To meet an antique book,  
In just the dress his century wore ;  
A privilege, I think,  
His venerable hand to take,  
And warming in our own,  
A passage back, or two, to make  
To times when he was young.  
His quaint opinions to inspect,  
His knowledge to unfold  
On what concerns our mutual mind,  
The literature of old :  
What interested scholars most,  
What competitions ran  
When Plato was a certainty  
And Sophocles a man,  
When Sappho was a living girl,  
And Beatrice wore  
The gown that Dante deified.  
Facts, centuries before,  
He traverses familiar,  
As one should come to town  
And tell you all your dreams were true :  
He lived where dreams were sown.  
His presence is enchantment,  
You beg him not to go ;  
His volumes shake their vellum heads  
And tantalise, just so.

EMILY DICKINSON.

## THE BOOK-PLATE'S PETITION.

BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE TEMPLE.

**W**HILE cynic CHARLES still trimm'd the van  
 'Twixt *Querouaille* and *Castlemaine*,  
 In days that shocked JOHN EVELYN,  
 My First Possessor fix'd me in.  
 In days of *Dutchmen* and of frost,  
 The narrow sea with JAMES I cross'd,  
 Returning when once more began  
 The Age of *Saturn* and of ANNE.  
 I am a part of all the past ;  
 I knew the GEORGES, 'first and last ;  
 I have been oft where else was none  
 Save the great wig of ADDISON ;  
 And seen on shelves beneath me grope  
 The little eager form of POPE.  
 I lost the Third that own'd me when  
 French NOAILLES fled at Dettingen ;  
 The year JAMES WOLFE surpris'd Quebec,  
 The Fourth in hunting broke his neck ;  
 The day that WILLIAM HOGARTH dy'd  
 The Fifth one found me in Cheapside.  
 This was a *Scholar*, one of those  
 Whose *Greek* is sounder than their *hose* ;  
 He lov'd old books and nappy ale,  
 So liv'd at Streatham, next to THRALE.  
 'Twas there this stain of grease I boast  
 Was made by DR. JOHNSON'S toast.  
 (He did it, as I think, for spite ;  
 My Master called him *Jacobite* !)



And now that I so long to-day  
 Have rested *post discrimina*,  
 Safe in the brass-wir'd bookcase where  
 I watch'd the Vicar's whit'ning hair,  
 Must I these travell'd bones inter  
 In some *Collector's* sepulchre ?  
 Must I be torn from hence and thrown  
 With *frontispiece* and *colophon* ?  
 With vagrant *Es*, and *Is*, and *Os*,  
 The spoil of plunder'd *Folios* !  
 With scraps and snippets that to ME  
 Are naught but *kitchen company* !  
 Nay, rather, FRIEND, this favour grant me :  
 Tear me at once ; *but don't transplant me.*

AUSTIN DOBSON.

Cheltenham, Sept. 31st, 1792.



## THE BOOKWORM.

WE flung the close-kept casement wide ;  
 The myriad atom-play  
 Streamed, with the mid-day's glancing tide,  
 Across him as he lay ;  
 Only the unused summer gust  
 Moved the thin hair of Dryasdust.

The notes he writ were barely dry ;  
 The entering breeze's breath  
 Fluttered the fruitless casuistry,  
 Checked at the leaf where Death—  
 The final commentator—thrust  
 His cold " Here endeth Dryasdust."

O fool and blind ! The leaf that grew,  
The opening bud, the trees,  
The face of men, he nowise knew,  
Or careless turned from these  
To delve, in folios' rust and must,  
The tomb he lived in, dry as dust.

He left, for mute Salmasius,  
The lore a child may teach,—  
For saws of dead Libanius,  
The sound of uttered speech ;  
No voice had pierced the sheep-skin crust  
That bound the heart of Dryasdust.

And so, with none to close his eyes,  
And none to mourn him dead,  
He in his dumb book-Babel lies  
With grey dust garmented.  
Let be : pass on. It is but just—  
These were thy gods, O Dryasdust !

Dig we his grave where no birds greet,—  
He loved no song of birds ;  
Lay we his bones where no men meet,—  
He loved no spoken words ;  
He let his human-nature rust—  
Write his *Hic Jacet* in the Dust.

AUSTIN DOBSON

## • MY BOOKS.

THEY dwell in the odour of camphor,  
 They stand in a Sheraton shrine,  
 They are "warranted early editions,"  
 These worshipful tomes of mine ;—

In their creamiest "Oxford vellum,"  
 In their redolent "crushed Levant,"  
 With their delicate watered linings,  
 They are jewels of price, I grant ;—

Blind-tooled and morocco-jointed,  
 They have Bedford's daintiest dress,  
 They are graceful, attenuate, polished,  
 But they gather the dust, no less ;—

For the row that I prize is yonder,  
 Away on the unglazed shelves,  
 The bulged and the bruised *octavos*,  
 The dear and the dumpy twelves,—

Montaigne with his sheep-skin blistered,  
 And Howell the worse for wear,  
 And the worm-drilled Jesuits' Horace,  
 And the little old cropped Molière,—

And the Burton I bought for a florin,  
 And the Rabelais foxed and flea'd,—  
 For the others I never have opened,  
 But those are the books I read.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

## THE COLLECTOR TO HIS LIBRARY.

BROWN Books of mine, who never yet  
 Have caused me anguish or regret,—  
 Save when some fiend in human shape  
 Has set your tender sides agape,  
 Or soiled with some unmanly smear  
 The whiteness of your page sincere,  
 Or scored you with some phrase inane,  
 The bantling of his idle brain,—  
 I love you : and because must end  
 This commerce between friend and friend,  
 I do implore each kindly fate—  
 To each and all I supplicate—  
 That you whom I have loved so long  
 May not be vended “for a song,”—  
 That you, my dear desire and care,  
 May ’scape the common thoroughfare,  
 The dust, the eating rain, and all  
 The shame and squalor of the stall.  
 Rather I trust your lot may touch  
 Some Croesus—if there should be such—  
 To buy you, and that you may so  
 From Croesus unto Croesus go  
 Till that inevitable day  
 When comes your moment of decay.

This, more than other good, I pray.

AUSTIN DOBSON.



## TO A PASTORAL POET.

AMONG my best I put your Book,  
 O Poet of the breeze and brook !  
 (That breeze and brook which blows and falls  
 More soft to those in city walls,)—  
 Among my best : and keep it still  
 Till down the fair grass-girdled hill,  
 Where slopes my garden-slip, there goes  
 The wandering wind that wakes the rose,  
 And scares the cohort that explore  
 The broad-faced sunflower o'er and o'er,  
 Or starts the restless bees that fret  
 The bindweed and the mignonette.

Then shall I take your Book, and dream  
 I lie beside some haunted stream ;  
 And watch the crisping waves that pass,  
 And watch the flicker in the grass ;  
 And wait—and wait—and wait to see  
 The Nymph . . . that never comes to me !

AUSTIN DOBSON.



## FOR A COPY OF HERRICK.

MANy days have come and gone,  
 Many suns have set and shone,  
 HERRICK, since thou sang'st of Wake,  
 Morris-dance and Barley-break ;—  
 Many men have ceased from care,  
 Many maidens have been fair,  
 Since thou sang'st of JULIA'S eyes,  
 JULIA'S lawns and tiffanies ;—

Many things are past : but thou,  
GOLDEN-MOUTH, art singing now,  
Singing clearly as of old,  
And thy numbers are of gold.

AUSTIN DOBSON.



DON QUIXOTE.

**B**EHIND thy pasteboard, on thy battered  
hack,

Thy lean cheek striped with plaster to and fro,  
Thy long spear levelled at the unseen foe,  
And doubtful Sancho trudging at thy back,  
Thou wert a figure strange enough, good lack !  
To make Wiseacredom, both high and low,  
Rub purblind eyes, and (having watched thee go)  
Dispatch its Dogberrys upon thy track :  
Alas ! poor Knight ! Alas ! poor soul possest !

Yet would to-day when Courtesy grows chill  
And life's fine loyalties are turned to jest  
Some fire of thine might burn within us still !  
Ah, would but one might lay his lance in rest,  
And charge in earnest—were it but a mill !

AUSTIN DOBSON.



TO A MISSAL OF THE THIRTEENTH  
CENTURY.

**M**ISSAL of the Gothic age,  
Missal with the blazoned page,  
Whence, O Missal, hither come,  
From what dim Scriptorium ?

Whose the name that wrought thee thus,  
Ambrose or Theophilus,  
Bending, through the waning light,  
O'er thy vellum scraped and white ;

Weaving 'twixt thy rubric lines  
Sprays and leaves and quaint designs ;  
Setting round thy border scrolled  
Buds of purple and of gold ?

Ah !—a wondering brotherhood,  
Doubtless, by that artist stood,  
Raising o'er his careful ways  
Little choruses of praise !

Glad when his deft hand would paint  
Strife of Sathanas and Saint,  
Or in secret coign entwist  
Jest of cloister humourist.

Well the worker earned his wage  
Bending o'er the blazoned page !  
Tired the hand and tired the wit  
Ere the final *Explicit* !

Not as ours the books of old—  
Things that steam can stamp and fold ;  
Not as ours the books of yore—  
Rows of type and nothing more.

Then a book was still a Book,  
Where a wistful man might look,  
Finding something through the whole  
Beating—like a human soul.

In that growth of day by day,  
When to labour was to pray,  
Surely something vital passed  
To the patient page at last ;

Something that one still perceives  
Vaguely present in the leaves !  
Something from the worker lent ;  
Something mute—but eloquent !

AUSTIN DOBSON.



A BOOKISH BALLAD.

(AFTER HOOD.)

I HAVE a goodly library, but oft they disappear,  
Those cherished volumes which I hold so very,  
—very dear.

I lost my *Bacon* t'other day—could anything be  
harder ?

My cook had taken it by stealth—I found it in the  
*Larder* !

I've just surveyed my books again, from ceiling to  
the floor,

And though my sight is very good, I can't see any  
*More* !

My *Swift* has flown ; my *Martin* too—'tis *Autumn*  
—here's a shock !

I see that Captain Bolter has *bolted* with my  
*Lock(e)* !



My *Hope* departed long ago, and now through  
some one's wiles

My dingy study has become a stranger to my  
*Smiles* !

My *Lever* left me long ago, I know not when or  
how—

I can't build "castles in the air," my *Mason's*  
missing now.

And yet, in spite of these mishaps, I have some  
pleasures still,

For can I not devour my *Lamb* and *Bullock*, too,  
at will ?

A tit-bit, too, from *Hog(g)* is rare—a slice of  
*Wolff(e)* not bad—

And then, when I am *thirsty*—why, I've *Porter*  
too, bedad.

My *Spencer* has been boned, 'tis true, but they  
have left my *Hood*,

Nor have they filched my *Mackintosh*, so I can  
face a flood.

At last I've found a *Key* to *Lock(e)*, though, it is  
odd, no doubt,

That, when I take his meaning *in*, I find his  
meaning *out* !

I still enjoy my *Crab(be)*'s nice *tales*, and, to my  
wishes yielding,

My boy became a cricketer by studying his  
*Fielding*.

*A Book-Lover's Panegyric.* 43

I have the works of *Watts* his name.—I'm colour  
blind, 'tis said,

For *Black* and *White* and *Brown* with me are  
very often *re(a)d* !

I'm very dutiful, of course, so love my *Mother well*.  
My *Hare* and *Hunt* have vanished, too, but *where*  
I cannot tell !

I have a *Park* to ramble through—and *this is not*  
a myth—

Alas ! my *Smith* can *nail* no more, for they have  
nailed my *Smith* !

But yet with *Bacon*, *Lamb*, and *Crab(be)*, and  
perhaps a bit of *Steel(e)*,

I still can make, whene'er I choose, a *literary*  
*meal* !

F. B. DOVETON.



A BOOK-LOVER'S PANEGYRIC.

I.

LET old Petrarca sing of love,  
Its passion and its bliss,  
And in his sugared sonnets tell  
The rapture of a kiss !  
Let Bacchanalian votaries  
Exulting praise their wine—  
But in the midst of all this praise  
The praise of books be mine !

## II.

A health to books ! come, Comrades all,  
And pledge me this full cup ;  
Raise high the foaming goblets' brim  
And drain the liquor up !  
Come, quaff this nectarean bowl,  
The brim raised to your lips,  
So this enthusiastic health  
All others shall eclipse !

## III.

A health to books ! a royal toast,  
And honoured by a few,  
But as the march of time goes on  
The world shall drink it too !  
Its men and women shall arise,  
And sing in zealous strain  
Their song of praise, and goblets raise  
To drink it o'er again !

## IV.

So here's to books, to noble books,  
Our pleasure and our boast ;  
Arise, ye denizens of earth,  
To honour this fair toast !  
Then here's to books, immortal books  
Light of our nights and days,—  
Stand up, O Universe, and chant  
A pæan in their praise !

## v.

And, once again, a health to books,  
Your goblets all refill ;  
When all things mortal are decayed  
May books be with us still !  
Then quaff a toast to glorious books  
In cups of ruby wine,  
And while the world extols things base  
The praise of books be mine !

CYRIL M. DREW.



## BOOKS.

## I.

WHEN sorrow sets around thy wayward path,  
And many troubles follow in her train ;  
When dire mischance it seems will never wane,  
And life for thee no sort of pleasure hath ;  
When friendship proves as frail as any lath,  
Snaps in a trice and leaves the dull slow pain—  
The aching heart that ne'er may hope again—  
And drear despair seems life's sole aftermath,  
There is an outlet from thy dreary creed ;  
There is a pasture on which thou may'st feed ;  
There is a never-failing friend at hand.  
Turn to thy shelves and choose a goodly tome,  
A mighty mind of ancient Greece or Rome,  
Perchance a bard of thine own native land.

## II.

Then may'st thou leave all troubles far behind,  
 And soar unto the regions of the blest ;  
 Then be thy body, mind and soul, at rest,  
 Oblivious of the tempest and the wind  
 That howls around the shipwreck of thy mind.  
 For, by the thralldom of that tome possessed,  
 Despair hath lost its potency to molest,  
 And not an inlet can thy troubles find.  
 Oh, blessings be on every poet head !  
 With wreaths of joy may each be garlanded,  
 And happiness for ever be their meed !  
 Who for us men hath wrought so great a joy,  
 Devoid of all adulterate alloy—  
 A genuine soil whereon the soul may feed.

CYRIL M. DREW.



## ON AN OLD ROMAUNT.

WHEN the night is dark and dreary, and the  
                   north-wind whistles shrill,  
 And the snow-storm drives in fury down the plain  
                   beneath the hill,  
 Like the necromancer's mirror, when his magic  
                   perfumes burn,  
 Mocking Time, these curious volumes make the  
                   glorious Past return.

Fast as ripples on the river, or cloud-shadows on  
the grass,  
As I read their quaint old pages, down my cur-  
tained chamber pass  
Mitred priest, and hospitaller, armed and mounted  
for the fray,  
Bands of bronzed condottieri, maidens fair as  
laughing May.

All that fancy loves to cherish, of the grand old  
feudal times—  
Palmer guides, and weary pilgrims, wending home  
from distant climes,  
Trembling Jews with jewel caskets, border-chiefs  
who own no law,  
Quivered bands of merry archers, mustered on the  
“greené shaw,”

Norman holds, embattled belfries, gyves, and  
chains, and dungeons dim,  
Winding stairs and blazing beacons, ancient arms  
grotesque and grim,  
Pensive nuns, in quest of simples, in the lowly  
midnight hour,  
Adepts o'er alembics chanting uncouth rhymes of  
mystic power,

Foreign marts, Venetian Doges, bales of precious  
merchandise,  
Stately streets in Flemish cities, burgher crowds  
in peaceful guise,

Mighty dukes by guards attended, foresters in  
kirtles green,  
Silver fonts and flaring tapers, ladies sheathed in  
jewels' sheen,

Moorish forts in far Granada, portals barred and  
turbans blue,  
Gardens green as blissful Eden, crystal fountains  
fair to view,  
Divans in the proud Alhambra, fairy mosques of  
Parian stone,  
Groups of Moors and whiskered Spaniards, tilting  
round the Soldan's throne.

And enrapt I gaze in silence, like a child before a  
show,  
Heedless, in my joy and wonder, how the golden  
moments flow,  
Till the cock's shrill ringing clarion breaks the  
spell and clears the air,  
And I find me silent seated in my old accustomed  
chair.



GREECE C. DUTT.

## MY BOOKS.

MY books, my books, my kingdom mine !  
I have no need for love to pine ;  
I have no mistress but my books,  
They never give me frowning looks,  
Nor mock my heart when hopes decline.

But women change sans cause or sign,  
And so I court the Muses Nine  
    In my poor den, or shady nooks,  
    My books, my books.

I love to see them line on line,  
In shabby coat or superfine.  
    They are such friends—from bards to cooks,  
    And speak with joy of babbling brooks,  
With peaceful woods that ever shine.  
Fill me up with Lethean wine,  
    My books, my books !

S. J. ADAIR FITZ-GERALD.



THE TRUTH ABOUT HORACE.

IT is very aggravating  
To hear the solemn prating  
Of the fossils who are stating  
    That old Horace was waiting ;  
When we know that with the ladies  
He was always raising hades,  
And with many an escapade his  
    Best productions are imbued.

There's really not much harm in a  
Large number of his carmina,  
But these people find alarm in a  
    Few records of his acts ;  
So they'd squelch the muse caloric,  
And to students sophomoric  
They'd present as metaphoric  
    What old Horace meant for facts.



We have always thought 'em lazy,  
 Now we adjudge 'em crazy.  
 Why, Horace was a daisy  
     That was very much alive ;  
 And the wisest of us know him  
 As his Lydia verses show him.  
 Go, read that virile poem,  
     It is No. 25.

He was a very owl, sir,  
 And, starting out to prowl, sir,  
 You bet he made Rome howl, sir,  
     Until he filled his date ;  
 With a massic-laden ditty  
 And a classic maiden pretty  
 He painted up the city,  
     And Mæcenæ paid the freight !

EUGENE FIELD.



## THE BIBLIOMANIAC'S BRIDE.

THE women-folk are like to books—  
     Most pleasing to the eye,  
 Whereon if anybody looks  
     He feels disposed to buy.

I hear that many are for sale—  
     Those that record no dates,  
 And such editions as regale  
     The view with coloured plates.

*The Bibliomaniac's Bride.* 51

Of every quality and grade  
And size they may be found—  
Quite often beautifully made,  
As often poorly bound.

Now, as for me, had I my choice,  
I'd choose no folios tall,  
But some octavo to rejoice  
My sight and heart withal.

As plump and podgy as a snipe—  
Well worth her weight in gold,  
Of honest, clean, conspicuous type,  
And just the size to hold !

With such a volume for my wife,  
How should I keep and con ;  
How like a dream should speed my life  
Unto its colophon !

Her frontispiece should be more fair  
Than any coloured plate ;  
Blooming with health, she would not care  
To extra-illustrate.

And in her pages there should be  
A wealth of prose and verse,  
With now and then a *jeu d'esprit*—  
But nothing ever worse !

Prose for me when I wished for prose,  
Verse, when to verse inclined—  
For ever bringing sweet repose  
To body, heart and mind.

Oh, I should bind this priceless prize  
 In bindings full and fine,  
 And keep her where no human eyes  
 Should see her charms, but mine !

With such a fair unique as this  
 What happiness abounds !  
 Who—who could paint my rapturous bliss,  
 My joy unknown to Lowndes !

EUGENE FIELD.



#### THE BIBLIOMANIAC'S PRAYER.

KEEP me, I pray, in wisdom's way,  
 That I may truths eternal seek ;  
 I need protecting care to-day.  
 My purse is light, my flesh is weak ;  
 So banish from my erring heart  
 All baleful appetites and hints  
 Of Satan's fascinating art—  
 Of first editions and of prints.  
 Direct me in some godly walk  
 Which leads away from bookish strife,  
 That I with pious deed and talk  
 May extra-illustrate my life.

But if, O Lord, it pleaseth Thee  
 To keep me in temptation's way,  
 I humbly ask that I may be  
 Most notably beset to-day.

Let my temptation be a book  
Which I shall purchase, hold, and keep,  
Whereon when other men shall look,  
They'll wail to know I got it cheap.  
Oh, let it such a volume be  
As in rare copperplates abounds !—  
Large paper, clean, and fair to see,  
Uncut, unique—unknown to Lowndes.

EUGENE FIELD.



A VOLUME OF DANTE.

I LIE unread, alone. None heedeth me.  
Day after day the cobwebs are unswept  
From my dim covers. I have lain and slept  
In dust and darkness for a century.  
An old forgotten volume I. You see !  
Such mighty words within my heart are kept  
That, reading once, great Ariosto wept  
In vain despair so impotent to be.

And once, with pensive eyes and drooping head,  
Musing, Vittoria Colonna came,  
And touched my leaves with dreamy finger-tips,  
Lifted me up half absently, and read ;  
Then kissed the page with sudden, tender lips,  
And sighed, and murmured one beloved name.

CAROLINE WILDER FELLOWS.

## AMONG MY BOOKS.

## A MOTLEY COLLECTION.

AND there is leaning "Pole on Whist"  
 Against "The Shorter Catechist";  
 A row of Browning, just above  
 That book of Michelet's on Love;  
 Sir Thomas Browne, discreet and staid,  
 Upon the upper shelf is laid;  
 And "Walks in Rome" by Mr. Hare  
 Is jostled by my Molière.  
 A vellum Villon, nothing loth,  
 Hobnobs with Balzac (rascals both);  
 Hosea Biglow's wit and pith  
 Are matched by those of Sydney Smith,  
 And Mr. Caudle's better half  
 Stands up with Petrarch, bound in calf.  
 And here and there your eye may see  
 A Dickens or a Thackeray.  
 That Irving peeping from the row  
 Is shelf-worn, for I love it so.  
 Here gentle Elia flitting goes  
 Round Marlowe's leonine repose,  
 While Goldsmith finds a welcome rest  
 With Aphra Behn, in russia drest.  
 And Murger's "Latin Quarter Life"  
 Is with "Josiah Allen's Wife."  
 Look all around, you have not missed  
 A single early dramatist.  
 I've all the poets—every one  
 From Chaucer down to Tennyson,

And here you see (I read it yet)  
Heptameron of Margaret.  
A work or two of Thomas Paine,  
The essays of M'sieur Montaigne,  
A "Joseph Andrews" bound in blue,  
A Virgil and a Horace, too.

These are the men that nightly meet,  
And hold me in their converse sweet.

PERCY FLAGE.



BOOK BROTHERHOOD.

HERE are my companions sleeping  
Tranquilly in each closed book,  
Till a spirit in me leaping  
From its bondage dares to look.

Here are those who felt deep heart-throes  
In the morning of the earth,  
All untutored, as the wind blows,  
Giving human song its birth ;  
Diverse men in diverse races  
Hearing, answering some faint call,  
Finding links and losing traces  
Where Oblivion drops its pall ;  
From chaotic dreams evolving  
Thought once breathed on speaking stone,  
Whose far-echoes now are solving  
Problems in Thought's later zone ;  
Disputants of soul and matter—  
God the Force, or Force the God

As the autumn winds that scatter  
Dry leaves on a dewy sod ;  
So departing, coming ever  
With a new-inspired endeavour,  
Here as brothers rest together.

Books that keep alive the ages  
On my shelves abide in peace,  
Truth enshrined within their pages  
Waiting for a full release ;  
Not alone in one tome dwelling,  
But in all, perchance, a gleam  
In the dark, some dark dispelling  
Of humanity's strange dream.  
Old true friends in welcome places  
Greet me in each varying mood,  
And new friends with fresh young faces  
Woo with keen solicitude ;  
Ancient discords merging slowly  
Into one harmonious whole,  
Time absorbing high or lowly  
In the majesty of soul.

Mighty dead, but mightier living  
Spirit of the brain and pen,  
Founts of Thought for ever giving  
Impetus to yearning men,  
So departing, coming ever  
With a new-inspired endeavour,  
Here as brothers rest together.

EDWARD FOSKETT.

## FROM "IDYLLS AND EPIGRAMS."

OUR master, Meleager, he who framed  
 The first Anthology and daintiest,  
 Mated each minstrel with a flower, and named  
 For each the blossom that beseemed him best.  
 'Twas then as now ; garlands were somewhat rare  
 Candidates many : one in a doleful strain  
 Lamented thus : " This is a sad affair ;  
 How shall I face my publisher again ?  
 Lacking some emblem suitable for me,  
 My book's undone ; I shall not sell a copy."  
 " Take courage, son," quoth Phœbus, " there  
 must be  
 Somewhere or other certainly a poppy."

RICHARD GARNETT.



## TO THE BOOKWORM.

REST thy book among the flowers,  
 Rest thy limbs amidst the heather ;  
 Looking skyward, thought endowers  
 All in life and books together.  
 Ah ! welcome musings ! only then  
 We learn that nature has to tell  
 So much, it takes a world of men  
 To hear ; long ages to unspell ;  
 And ages longer to unfold.  
 See our books among the flowers !  
 Rest our limbs in leafy bowers !  
 Learning much that's yet untold.

G. LAWRENCE GOMME.



## TO A BIBLIOMANIAC.

BECAUSE your books are richly bound,  
 You feel a scholar through and through ?  
 Then one Cremona, smooth and sound,  
 Might make a fiddler of you, too !

EDMUND GOSSE.



## WITH A COPY OF HERRICK.

FRESH with all airs of woodland brooks  
 And scents of showers,  
 Take to your haunt of holy books  
 This saint of flowers.

When meadows burn with budding May,  
 And heaven is blue,  
 Before his shrine our prayers we say,—  
 Saint Robin true.

Love crowned with thorns is on his staff,—  
 Thorns of sweet-briar ;  
 His benediction is a laugh,  
 Birds are his choir.

His sacred robe of white and red  
 Unction distils,  
 He hath a nimbus round his head  
 Of daffodils.

EDMUND GOSSE.

## IN THE LIBRARY.

THE room was given to firegleams and to night,  
 And as I mused, lo ! where the books had  
 been

Were souls of books, alive, and on my sight

Dawned growing day, in midst whereof was seen,  
 With sad stern face, eyes pitying, vesture white,  
 The Lord of Souls, who, dying, won Life's fight.  
 Then all the book-souls bowed before the bright  
 Surrounding glory of the Lord of Light.

Then, one by one, He touched them on the side,  
 And some to scented ashes sank and died ;

Some gave the semblance of a human heart,  
 Some like a working hand of help did show,  
 Some changed to lamps tipped with a steadfast  
 glow,

One only of its Lord was counterpart.

H. V. S. HERBERT.



## THE REALISTIC CULT.

WHEN this old world was younger by a score  
 of years or more,  
 It hadn't been enlightened by our realistic lore—  
 A novel sort of ethical philosophy, combined  
 With therapeutic fiction of the most "progressive"  
 kind.

For Tolstoi hadn't then begun his theories to  
teach—

(Ignoring quite the maxim, "You must practise  
what you preach")—

That marriage is a snare devised the virtuous to  
beguile,

And family affection is a feeling to revile.

And Zola—for his pen was yet an embryonic quill—  
Had not essayed to medicate our every moral ill  
With allopathic doses of immoral literature,  
Prescribed by homœopathic rule that like the like  
will cure.

And Kipling's light had never failed—in fact, it  
hadn't shone,

Revealing depths of folly that had else remained  
unknown ;

And Ibsen hadn't proved that, since one pillar  
couldn't stand,

Our social structure therefore is unstably built on  
sand.

Alas ! in ignorance so dense it simulated bliss,  
We little dreamed how wofully the world had  
gone amiss

Before those streams of wisdom had begun their  
copious flow

From Russian steppe and Paris slum and Indian  
bungalow.

M. B. HILL.

## IN A COPY OF "OVER THE TEACUPS."

DEAL gently with us, ye who read !  
 Our largest hope is unfulfilled,  
 The promise still outruns the deed,  
 The tower, but not the spire we build.

Our whitest pearl we never find ;  
 Our ripest fruit we never reach ;  
 The flowering moments of the mind  
 Lose half their petals in our speech.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.



## BOOKS.

BOOKS ! sweet associates of the silent hour,  
 What blessed aspirations do I owe  
 To your companionship—your peaceful power  
 High and pure pleasure ever can bestow,—  
 Of noble ones I trace the path through life,  
 Joy in their joys, and sorrow as they mourn ;  
 Gaze on their Christian animating strife,  
 And shed some fond tears o'er their untimely  
 urn :  
 Or with heroic beings tread the soil  
 Of a freed country, by themselves made free,  
 And taste the recompense of virtuous toil,  
 The exaltation of humanity.

F. HORNELOWER.

## BOOKS AND BINDINGS.

ON my study shelves they stand,  
Well known all to eye and hand  
Bound in gorgeous cloth of gold,  
In morocco rich and old,  
Some in paper, plain and cheap,  
Some in muslin, calf, and sheep ;  
Volumes great and volumes small  
Ranged along my study wall.  
But their contents are past finding  
By their size or by the binding.

There is one with gold agleam,  
Like the Sangreal in a dream,  
Back and boards in every part  
Triumph of the binder's art ;  
Costing more, 'tis well believed,  
Than the author e'er received.  
But its contents ? Idle tales,  
Flappings of a shallop's sails !  
In the treasury of learning  
Scarcely worth a penny's turning.

Here's a tome in paper plain,  
Soiled and torn and marred with stain,  
Cowering from each statelier book  
In the darkest, dustiest nook.  
Take it down, and lo ! each page  
Breathes the wisdom of a sage !  
Weighed a thousand times in gold,  
Half its worth would not be told,  
For all the truth of ancient story  
Crowns each line with deathless glory.

On my study shelves they stand ;  
But my study walls expand,  
As mind's pinions are unfurled,  
Till they compass all the world.  
Endless files go marching by,  
Men of lowly rank and high,  
Some in broadcloth, gem-adorned,  
Some in homespun, fortune-scorned ;  
But God's scales that all are weighed in  
Heed not what each man's arrayed in.

WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON.



TO THE GENTLE READER.

"A French writer (whom I love well) speaks of three kinds of companions—men, women and books."—  
SIR JOHN DAVYS.\*

THREE kinds of companions, men, women  
and books,  
Were enough, said the elderly Sage, for his  
ends.  
And the women we deem that he chose for their  
looks,  
And the men for their cellars: the books were  
his friends:  
"Man delights me not," often, "nor woman,"  
but books  
Are the best of good comrades in loneliest nooks.

\* I never read Sir John Davys, though doubtless he is a very nice writer, and the motto is at second hand. It was quoted by Mr. Richard Stoddard, of America.

For man will be wrangling—for woman will fret  
 About everything infinitesimal small :  
 Like the Sage in our Plato, I'm "anxious to get  
 On the side"—on the sunnier side—"of a wall."  
 Let the wind of the world toss the nations like rooks,  
 If only you'll leave me at peace with my Books.

And which are my books? Why, 'tis much as  
 you please,

For given 'tis a book, it can hardly be wrong,  
 And Bradshaw himself I can study with ease,  
 Though for choice I might call for a Sermon or  
 Song ;

And Locker on London, and Sala on Cooks,  
 And "Tom Brown," and Plotinus, they're all of  
 them Books.

There's Fielding to lap one in currents of mirth ;  
 There's Herrick to sing of a flower or a fay ;  
 Or good Maître François to bring one to earth,  
 If Shelley or Coleridge have snatched one away ;  
 There's Müller on Speech, there's Gurney on  
 Spooks,  
 There's Tylor on Totems, there's all sorts of  
 Books.

There's roaming in regions where every one's been,  
 Encounters where no one was ever before,  
 There's "Leaves" from the Highlands we owe to  
 the Queen,

There's Holly's and Leo's Adventures in Kôr ;  
 There's Tanner, who dwelt with Pawnees and  
 Chinooks—

You can cover a great deal of country in Books.

There are books, highly thought of, that nobody  
reads,

There's Gensius' dearly delectable tome  
On the Cannibal—he on his neighbour who feeds—  
And in blood-red morocco 'tis bound, by  
Derome ;

There's Montaigne here (a Foppens), there's  
Roberts (on Flukes),  
There's Elzevirs, Aldines, and Gryphius' Books.

There's Bunyan, there's Walton, in early editions,  
There's many a quarto uncommonly rare ;  
There's quaint old Quevedo, a dream with his  
visions,

There's Jonson the portly, and Burton the spare ;  
There's Boston of Ettrick, who preached of the  
" Crooks

In the Lots" of us mortals, who bargain for  
Books.

There's Ruskin to keep one exclaiming "What  
next ?"

There's Browning to puzzle, and Gilbert to chaff,  
And " Marcus Aurelius " to soothe one if vexed,  
And good *Marcus Twainus* to lend you a laugh ;  
And there's capital tomes that are filled with fly  
hooks,

And I've frequently found them the best kind of  
Books.

ANDREW LANG.





## THE BOOK BATTALION.

WHEREVER I go, there's a trusty battalion  
That follows me faithfully, steady and  
true ;

Their force, when I falter, I safely may rally on,  
Knowing their stoutness will carry me through :  
Some fifteen hundred in order impartial,  
So ranged that they tell what they mean by their  
looks.

Of all the armies the world can marshal  
There are no better soldiers than the well-tried  
books.

Dumb in their ranks on the shelves imprisoned,  
They never retreat. Give the word, and they'll  
fire !

A few with scarlet and gold are bedizened,  
But many muster in rough attire ;  
And some, with service and scars grown wizened,  
Seem hardly the mates for their fellows in youth ;  
Yet they, and the troops armed only with quiz and  
Light laughter, all battle alike for the truth.

Here are those who gave motive to sock and to  
buskin ;

With critics, historians, poets galore ;  
A cheaply uniformed set of Ruskin,  
Which Ruskin would hate from his heart's very  
core ;

Molière ('99), an old calf-bound edition,  
" *De Pierre Didot l'aîné ! et de Firmin Didot,*"  
Which, meek and demure, with a sort of contrition,  
Is masking its gun-lights, with fun all aglow ;

*From the Fly-leaf of a Book.* 67

And Smollett and Fielding, as veterans battered—  
Cloth stripped from their backs, and their sides  
out of joint,

The pictures of life all naked and tattered  
Being thus applied to themselves with a point ;  
And six or eight books that I wrote myself,  
To look at which, even, I'm half afraid ;  
They brought me more labour and pleasure than  
pelf,

And are clamouring still because they're not paid.  
But these raw levies remain still faithful,  
Because they know that volumes old  
Stand by me, although their eyes, dim and wraith-  
ful,

Remind me they seldom at profit were sold.  
So I say, be they splendid or tatterdemalion,  
If only you know what they mean by their looks,  
You will never find a better battalion  
Of soldiers to serve you than well-tried books.

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.



FROM THE FLY-LEAF OF A BOOK OF OLD  
PLAYS.

AT Cato's Head in Russell Street  
These leaves she sat a-stitching ;  
I fancy she was trim and neat,  
Blue-eyed and quite bewitching.

Before her in the street below,  
All powder, ruffs, and laces,  
There strutted idle London beaux  
To ogle pretty faces ;

While, filling many a Sedan chair  
With hoop and monstrous feather,  
In patch and powder, London's fair  
Went trooping past together.

Swift, Addison, and Pope, mayhap  
They sauntered slowly past her,  
Or printer's boy with gown and cap  
For Steele went trotting faster.

For beau nor wit had she a look,  
Nor lord nor lady minding ;  
She bent her head above this book,  
Attentive to her binding.

And one stray thread of golden hair,  
Caught on her nimble fingers,  
Was stitched within this volume, where  
Until to-day it lingers.

Past and forgotten, beaux and fair ;  
Wigs, powder, all out-dated ;  
A queer antique, the Sedan chair ;  
Pope, stiff and antiquated.

Yet, as I turn these odd old plays,  
This single stray lock finding,  
I'm back in those forgotten days,  
And watch her at her binding.

WALTER LEARNED.

## THE PASSIONATE READER TO HIS POET.

BOTH it not thrill thee, Poet,  
 Dead and dust though thou art,  
 To feel how I press thy singing  
 Close to my heart?—  
 Take it at night to my pillow,  
 Kiss it before I sleep,  
 And again when the delicate morning  
 Beginneth to peep?  
 See how I bathe thy pages  
 Here in the light of the sun,  
 Through thy leaves, as a wind among roses,  
 The breezes shall run.  
 Feel how I take thy poem  
 And bury within it my face,  
 As I pressed it last night in the heart of a flower,  
 Or deep in a dearer place.  
 Think, as I love thee, Poet,  
 A thousand love beside;  
 Dear women love to press thee too  
 Against a sweeter side.  
 Art thou not happy, Poet?  
 I sometimes dream that I  
 For such a fragrant fame as thine  
 Would gladly sing and die.  
 Say, wilt thou change thy glory  
 For this same youth of mine?  
 And I will give my days i' the sun  
 For that great song of thine.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

FROM "THE BOOKMAN'S AVALON." \*

AY, come ye hither to this pleasant land,  
 For here in truth are vines of Engaddi,  
 Here golden urns of manna to thine hand,  
 And rocks whence honey flows deliciously ;  
 Udders from which comes frothing copiously  
 The milk of life, ears filled with sweetest grains,  
 And fig-trees knowing no sterility ;  
 Here Paradisal streams make rich the plains,  
 O ! come and bathe therein, ye book-enamoured  
 swains.

Is thy desire for Bibles Mazarin ?  
 Here are the very types that printed them.  
 Or doth Dutch Coster thy allegiance win ?  
 Here are the holy shrines of Haarlem.  
 Sigh you to touch the extremest healing hem  
 Of "Golden Legend" or of "Game of Chess" ?  
 Here are such stores as you shall straight  
 contemn,  
 The paltry "fragments" some of us caress,  
 And more, it shall be yours to touch that sacred press.

Love you colossi of the Plantin mould ?  
 Here in his quaint old print-rooms may you  
 dream,  
 Pull at the presses of his men of old,  
 Muse o'er the proof-sheets of some school-  
 man's theme

\* The first stanza is paraphrased from Richard de Bury.

Garnered in ancient drawers ; and you may  
deem  
The *typographici* on holiday,  
And that to-morrow the old rooms will teem  
With the old life, in the old busy way—  
Just as if all the years had never slipped away.

\* \* \* \* \*

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.



CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

WHEN do I love you most, sweet books of  
mine ?

In strenuous morns when o'er your leaves I pore,  
Austerely bent to win austerest lore,  
Forgetting how the dewy meadows shine ;  
Or afternoons when honeysuckles twine  
About the seat, and to some dreamy shore  
Of old Romance, where lovers evermore  
Keep blissful hours, I follow at your sign ?

Yea ! ye are precious then, but most to me  
Ere lamplight dawneth, when low croons the fire  
To whispering twilight in my little room,  
And eyes read not, but sitting silently  
I feel your great hearts throbbing deep in quire,  
And hear you breathing round me in the gloom.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

## WITH PIPE AND BOOK.

WITH Pipe and Book at close of day,  
 O ! what is sweeter, mortal, say  
 It matters not what book on knee,  
 Old Izaak or the Odyssey,  
 It matters not meerschaum or clay.  
 And though one's eyes will dream astray,  
 And lips forget to sue or sway,  
 It is "enough to merely Be,"  
 With Pipe and Book.  
 What though our modern skies be grey,  
 As bards aver, I will not pray  
 For "soothing Death" to succour me,  
 But ask thus much, O Fate, of thee,—  
 A little longer here to stay  
 With Pipe and Book.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

A BOOKMAN'S COMPLAINT OF HIS  
LADY.

MY lady oftentimes chideth me  
 Because I love so much to be  
 Amid my honest folios.  
 "Thou lovest more to pore on those"—  
 In pretty scorn she sometimes saith—  
 "Than on thy mistress' eyes, i' faith !  
 Small good true lovers gain meseems  
 From dust and must of printed reams."  
 Ah ! would that I could make her see,  
 What is so clear to thee and me,

How much our happy love-life owes  
To those poor honest folios.  
She little dreams that hidden there  
I found a glass that mirrored her,  
A magic glass which showed her me  
As my own soul's ideal She,  
Long ere we met and wedded eyes  
Or made a soft exchange of sighs.  
Nor knoweth she that thence I drew  
The thought that, sweet as morning dew,  
Changeth the leaden life to gold,  
And keepeth Love from growing old.  
Nor may I tell what things beside  
Within those leathern covers hide.  
How would'st she scorn my small deceit,  
Dare I confess that fine conceit  
That pleased her so the other day,  
Was from an old-world roundelay ;  
And many another charm and grace  
That keeps Love young in spite of days,  
Was but a bloom that long had lain  
'Mid yellow pages young again.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.



AN INSCRIPTION.

HAVE you loved the good books of the world,—  
And written none ?  
Have you loved the great poet,—  
And burnt your little rhyme ?  
“ O be my friend, and teach me to be thine.”

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.



## "APOLLO'S GARDEN."

VERSE of my own ! why ask so poor a thing,  
 When I might gather from the garden-ways  
 Of sunny memory fragrant offering  
 Of deathless blooms and white unwithering  
 sprays ?

Shakespeare had given me an English rose,  
 And honeysuckle Spenser sweet as dew,  
 Or I had brought you from that dreamy close  
 Keats' passion-blossom, or the mystic blue  
 Star-flower of Shelley's song, or shaken gold  
 From lilies of the Blessed Damozel,  
 Or stolen fire from out the scarlet fold  
 Of Swinburne's poppies—yet it seemeth well,  
 Though all this flowery largess waitèd thee,  
 That you should ask a paltry weed from me !

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.



## A LIBRARY IN A GARDEN.

"A Library in a Garden ! The phrase seems to  
 contain the whole felicity of man."

EDMUND GOSSE.

A WORLD of books amid a world of green,  
 Sweet song without, sweet song again within !  
 Flowers in the garden, in the folios too :  
 O happy Bookman, let me live with you !

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

BALLADE OF THE *CAXTON HEAD*.

NEWS ! Good News ! at the old year's end :  
 Lovers of learning, come buy, come buy !  
 Now to old Holborn let bookmen wend,  
 Though the town be grimy, and grim the sky.  
 News ! Good News ! is our Christmas cry ;  
 For our feast of reason is richly spread,  
 And hungry bookmen may turn and try  
 The famous *Sign* of the *Caxton Head*.

Let moralists talk of the lifelong friend ;  
 But books are the safest of friends, say I !  
 The best of good fellows will oft offend ;  
 But books can never do wrong : for why ?  
 To their lover's ear, and their lover's eye,  
 They are ever the same as in dear years fled ;  
 And the choicest haunt, till you bid them fly,  
 The famous *Sign* of the *Caxton Head*.

In one true fellowship see them blend !  
 The delicate pages of Italy ;  
 Foulis and Baskerville, bad to lend ;  
 And the strong black letter of Germany :  
 Here rare French wonders of beauty lie,  
 Wrought by the daintiest of hands long dead :  
 All these are waiting, till you draw nigh  
 The famous *Sign* of the *Caxton Head*.

## L'ENVOI.

Bookmen ! whose pleasures can never die,  
 While books are written, and books are read :  
 For the honour of Caxton, pass not by  
 The famous *Sign* of the *Caxton Head*.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

## MODERN APPRECIATION.

LET others praise the bards who, if inspired,  
 To realms unknown have long ago retired.  
 Be mine to hymn the minor poets' pages,  
 Song's latest gift from out the deathless ages ;  
 In vellum covers or some dainty dress,  
 With classic imprint "At the Chiswick Press" ;  
 Or others who emerge each month, 'tis said,  
 From Vigo Street—yea, from the Bodley Head.  
 How gay their gilding, and their margins wide,  
 If one by any chance should peep inside !  
 How neat their printing, neater still their rhymes,  
 Neatest of all their spirits are at times !  
 With quips and cranks in mode of long ago,  
 Ballade and virelai or blithe rondeau ;  
 Or some there be so "decadent" they scorn  
 The rhyme and rhythm of an art outworn,  
 Burlesquing Whitman as with assonance,  
 They jolt along in clownish, clumsy dance.  
 Here, like a dragonfly mid swarms of midges,  
 Our new Elizabethan, *Robert Bridges* ;  
*Kipling*, the skipper of the later crew,  
 Our captain on a voyage that's alway new ;  
*Henley*, magician, who can deftly make  
 The meanest words a new enchantment take :  
 With *Stevenson*, "our Louis,"—all too brief  
 His pages are, one lingers on each leaf.  
 Among the rest how mightily these loom,  
 Though on my shelves they take but scanty room.  
 Here's *Lord de Tabley*, gay in green and gold,  
 With *Rickett's* fantasies in fashion old.  
 Next *Q's* "Green Bays," and then a row in green,

With kittle cattle, fattest kine and lean ;  
*Miles'* huge anthology bulks heavily,  
"Poets and Poetry of the Century."  
*Le Gallienne's* "English Poems," and laid upon it  
"Volumes in Folio" and "My Ladies' Sonnet."  
*George Moore* with "Pagan Poems" and "Flowers  
of Passion" ;

The earliest warbler in the latest fashion,  
Which, setting deadly sins in suave verse,  
Smashes one decalogue to frame a worse.  
*Oscar!* the lover of the jewelled word,  
Whose pages by rude hands are seldom stirred.  
*Gale*, who with milkmaids and in orchards blowing  
Sets Herrick's daffodils again a-growing.  
Next to him *Syntons*, with his "Silhouettes"  
And "Days and Nights." What chosen epithets  
Shall mark twin-singers of the rhymes concealed  
Beneath the pseudonym of *Michael Field*?  
Then *Watson's* "Epigrams," and "Wordsworth's  
Grave,"

With other poems Time must surely save ;  
So, too, assured from harm by jealous Fates,  
One thinks must stay the Celtic rhymes of *Yeats*,  
With *Graham Tomson's* books, the sweet "Bird-  
Bride"

And "Summer Night" safe nestling side by side.  
Near "Silverpoints," a volume by *John Gray*,  
Precious inside and out, in every way,  
Like *Sayle's* last book, "Musa Consolatrix" . . .  
But now my Pegasus against the pricks  
Kicks out like Balaam's steed, and says to me,  
"Urge me no longer, for no end I see."

So here, in short, on rows of groaning shelves  
 Are scores of books that ought to sing themselves.  
 Not mine to hymn these hundreds who exist  
 Upon the minor poets' long-drawn list.  
 Some few I love, yet still each first edition  
 Wait's but the triumph of my true ambition ;  
 When catalogues announce it "very rare,"  
 I take the hint ; ye high gods, hear my prayer,  
 Raise but the market value of my store,  
 I'll sell them all, and then—I'll buy some more !

HART A. KING.



#### A ROMAN SINGER.

"Horatius Flaccus, B.C. 8.  
 There's not a doubt about the date,—  
 You're dead and buried."

AUSTIN DOBSON.

A DUODECIMO in yellow boards,  
 Red linen back and light-blue paper-label ;  
 "Horace by Francis,"—this it is affords  
 The "guardian keys" to fancies that enable  
 Me to draw boldly on the Muse's hoards ;—  
 Even his little volume on my table.

The title neatly lettered—pen and ink ;  
 Edges uncut, by Time and touch soiled sadly ;  
 Within, a portrait—copper-plate, I think—  
 Engraved by W. Wise,—the eyes look badly  
 (The poet *had* weak eyes) and seem to blink :  
 They would have welcomed spectacles right  
 gladly.

The next page shows two lovers,—'neath the  
twain

This couplet, cut in slim italics faintly :—

"*Clear was the Night, the face of Heaven Serene,*"

(The capitals are introduced here quaintly,—)

"*Bright shone the Moon (a)midst her starry  
train.*"

The whole effect more classical than saintly—

As is befitting. Then the publishers :—

"F. & J. Allman, Gt. Queen Str't,"—and after,

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,"—the which all here occurs

Sandwiched 'twixt "London" and the date,—  
as laughter

Breaks between merry sayings and defers

Utterance of *bons mots* that will shake the rafter.

The date aforesaid : 1826,—

Which makes it eight-and-fifty golden summers

Or silver winters, since from out the mix

Of a town bookstall, open to all comers,

Some scholar bought it and burnt midnight wicks

Perusing it and sipping strong punch "rummers."

A short "Life" of the author comes before

The "Odes" and "Satires" and "Epistles,"  
telling

The story of his feeting in the war

At Philippi ;—how he desired a dwelling

Far from the crowd, and how his head was hoar

At forty, and his figure roundly swelling

To comfortable stoutness, which agreed

With his small stature and convivial manner ;

All these particulars we her~~e~~n read ;—

Likewise how he was sure that on the banner  
Of Fame his rhymes would down the ages speed.

(*His* muse had more than flattery to fan her.)

Then, too, this tiny volume (on my soul !

'Tis gossip) tells how great Augustus Cæsar  
Sent him a "little, short, thick" book or scroll,

And, veiling the mild tyrant in the teaser,  
Compared the poet to the parchment roll,—

(This from Suetonius unto you and me, sir.)

Thrice happy bard, to win Mæcenas' heart !

Small wonder that thou perished in thy sorrow  
At his decease. When such rare spirits part

It is to meet again upon the morrow—

As when one drinks a cup of deadliest art,

Another from dead lips his death may borrow.

Rest thou in peace ! Thy soul within my hand

Waits to commune with a congenial spirit.

Methinks Time's slender thread of glittering sand

Runs upward in the hour-glass. I can hear it

Leading away the barrier years that stand

Between this age and thine, as I draw near it.

CHARLES HENRY LÜDERS.



#### A BOOK.

A GOOD book is a friend ; the best of friends,  
That cannot be estranged or take offence  
Howe'er neglected, but returns at will  
With the old friendship.

W. J. LINTON.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

WITH childish glee he hugs his new-found  
prize—

His grand *trouvaille*. He carols forth his joy,  
“’Twas cheap as dirt ! Oh, let me feast mine  
eyes !”

And lover-like he gloats upon his toy ;  
His cup is full : his bliss has no alloy.  
Then sobers him an anxious sad surmise,  
Is it complete ? To well-thumbed Lowndes he  
hies,  
Alluring Lowndes, the bibliophile’s decoy.

“What not in Lowndes ! O treasure rich and  
rare !”

He chortles in an ecstasy divine,  
And thinks aloud, “Unerring scent is mine :  
The Grolier Club ? ah, how the boys will stare !”

Renews his search and then indeed looks blue,—  
“Should have six plates”—and his has only  
two !

HALKETT LORD.



ROMANTIC RECOLLECTIONS.

WHEN I lay in a cradle and suck’d a coral  
I lov’d romance in my childish way ;  
And stories, with or without a moral,  
Were welcome as ever the flowers in May.



For love of the false I learnt my spelling,  
And brav'd the perils of A B C ;  
While matters of fact were most repelling,  
Romance was pleasant as aught could be.

My reading took me to desert islands,  
And buried me deep in Arabian Nights ;  
Sir Walter led me amongst the Highlands,  
Or into the thickest of Moslem fights.  
I found the elder Dumas delightful—  
Before the son had eclipsed the dad,  
And Harrison Ainsworth finely frightful,  
And Fenimore Cooper far from bad.

A few years later I took to reading  
The morbid stories of Edgar Poe—  
Not healthy viands for youthful feeding  
(And all my advisers told me so).  
But, healthy or not, I enjoyed them vastly ;  
My feverish fancy was nightly fed  
Upon horrible crimes and murders ghastly,  
Which sent me terrified off to bed.

Well, what with perils upon the prairies,  
And haunted ruins and ghosts in white,  
And wars with giants and gifts from fairies,  
At last I came to be crazed outright ;  
And, many a time, in my nightly slumbers,  
Bearing a glove as a lady's gage,  
I held the list against countless numbers,  
After the style of the darkest age.

*"Io Grolierii et Ami-Corum."* 83

I am changed at present ; the olden fever  
Has left my brain in a sounder state ;  
In commonplace I'm a firm believer,  
And hunt for figures and fact and date.  
I have lost a lot of my old affection  
For books on which I was wont to feed,  
But still I can thrill at the recollection  
Of mystery, magic, and martial deed.

HALKETT LORD.



"IO GROLIERII ET AMI-CORUM."

I F borrowed books but home returned again !  
Or did they from their wandering escape  
In pristine grace, with no deflow'ring stain,  
No dog's-eared leaf, no binding all agape !  
Against my wish my action thus I shape :  
Like all true hearts, to share my treasures fain,  
I'd gladly lend—but parting's sad sweet pain.  
Ah, Grolier ! Would thy motto I might ape !

No faint half-heart, no grudging spirit thine :  
No boastful vaunt, to further private ends,  
The never-dying, gold-emblazoned line  
That tells the world thy books were for thy friends.

But yet, methinks, to cynic eyes it looks  
As though thy friends out-numbered thy books.

HALKETT LORD.

## A HUNTING SONG.

LET sons of Nimrod, mighty men,  
The "painter" hunt, the grizzly bear,  
Or beard the lion in his den,  
Or rouse the tiger from his lair ;  
Destroy the slender, graceful musk,  
The kangaroo of deadly kick,  
The crested boar with cruel tusk,  
Or river horse of hide so thick.  
Let those who hurl the swift harpoon  
Enjoy the "flurry" of the whale,  
Let darkies tree the sly racoon,  
And gourmets track the toothsome snail.  
Let "sportsmen" hunt the savage hare,  
By scores the ruthless pigeon shoot,  
The fiery untamed rabbit snare,  
Or bait the frumious bandicoot.  
A nobler quest is ours by far,  
A hunt, though "still," that calls for grit ;  
For none escape without a scar,  
And most of us get badly "bit."  
No useless sacrifice we make,  
Though hot the scent and fast the pace ;  
No life of bird, or beast, we take,  
Though blood be up, and keen the chase.  
Our quarry—books—the Elzevir,  
The scarce De Worde, the rare De Bry,  
The early Block Book, quaint and queer,  
Machlinia, or old Le Bee.

Types of Guinta, Gerard Leu,  
Colard Mansion, Baskerville,  
Ulric Han, or John Letou,  
Primers parchment bound by Hyll.

The copy tall, the stainless marge,  
The edge uncut by binder's plough,  
The letter black, the paper large,  
The cuts of Bewick, maps of Blaeu.

The catenati with their chains,  
Le Gascon's fairy filmy grace,  
And books in which poor Roger Payne's  
Square solid handiwork we trace.

Chefs d'œuvre of Eve, so hard to meet,  
Of Padeloup, Duseuil, Derome,  
The daisies gold of Marguérite,  
Du Barry's rose-enveloped tome.

The abbé Cotin's twining C's,  
The blazoned bees of Jacques de Thou,  
Grolier's generous *devise*,  
The "human skin" of Doc. A—skew.

All these with ardour we pursue,  
We struggle hard to lead the van,  
The game's in sight ! A view halloo !  
The Devil take the hindmost man.

HALKETT LORD.



## THE OLD SCHOOL-BOOKS.

WHAT pleasant memories cluster round these  
volumes old and worn,  
With covers smirched and bindings creased, and  
thumbed and torn !  
These are the books we used to con, I and poor  
brother Will,  
When we were boys together in the school-house  
on the hill !  
Well I recall the nights at home, when side by  
side we sat  
Before the fire, and o'er these books indulged in  
whispered chat.  
And how, when father chided us for idling time  
away,  
Our eyes bent to the task as though they'd never  
been astray.  
The old-time proverbs scribbled here, the caution  
to beware  
(" Steal not this book, my honest friend ") scrawled  
roughly here and there,  
The blurs, the blots, the luncheon spots, the  
numberless dog's ears,  
The faded names, the pictures, and, alas ! the  
stains of tears—  
All take me back in mind to days when cloudless  
was the sky,  
When grief was so short-lived I smiled before my  
tears were dry ;  
When, next to father's angry frown, I feared the  
awful nod

That doomed me, trembling, to advance and  
humbly kiss the rod.  
How bright those days ! Our little cares, our  
momentary fears,  
And e'en our pains, evanished with a burst of  
sobs and tears,  
And every joy seemed great enough to balance all  
our woe ;  
What pity that, when griefs are real, they can't be  
balanced so !  
The school-house stands in ruins now, the boys  
have scattered wide ;  
A few are old and grey like me, but nearly all  
have died ;  
And brother Will, is one of these ; his curly head  
was laid  
Down by the brook, at father's side, beneath the  
willow's shade.  
These books, so quaint and queer to you, to me  
are living things ;  
Each tells a story of the past, and each a message  
brings.  
Whene'er I sit, at eventide, and turn their pages  
o'er,  
They seem to speak in tones that thrilled my heart  
in days of yore.  
The school-boy of to-day would laugh, and throw  
these old books by :  
But, think you, neighbour, could his heart consent  
if he were I ?

R. W. McALPINE.

## A BALLADE OF BOOK-MAKING.

WHEN wise Koheleth long ago—  
    Though when and how the pundit  
    wrangle—  
Complained of books, and how they grow  
    And twist poor mankind's brains a-tangle,  
He did not dream the fatal fangle  
    To such a pitch would e'er extend,  
And such a world of paper mangle—  
    Of making books there is no end.

The poets weep for last year's snow,  
    About the porch the schoolmen dangle,  
The owl-like eyes of science glow  
    O'er arc, hypotenuse, and angle ;  
The playwrights mouth, the preachers jangle,  
    The critics challenge and defend,  
And Fiction turns the Muses' mangle—  
    Of making books there is no end.

Where'er we turn, where'er we go,  
    The books increase, the bookmen brangle :  
Our bookshelves groan with row on row  
    Of nonsense typed in neat quadrangle.  
Better to burn the lot and twangle  
    An honest banjo ; better tend  
To ride and box and shoot and angle—  
    Of making books there is no end.

## ENVOY.

Few books are worth a copper spangle :  
Come forth, and choose, my dusty friend,  
The ranchman's rope, the nautch-girl's bangle—  
Of making books there is no end.

JUSTIN HUNTLEY MCCARTHY.



## MY BOOKS.

ON level lines of woodwork stand  
My books obedient to my hand ;  
And Cæsar pale against the wall  
Smiles sternly Roman over all.  
Within the four walls of this room  
Life finds its prison, youth its tomb :  
For here the minds of other men  
Prompt and deride the labouring pen ;  
And here the wisdom of the wise  
Dances like motes before the eyes.  
Outside, the great world spins its way,  
Here studious night dogs studious day.  
A mighty store of dusty books,  
Little and great, fill all the nooks,  
And line the walls from roof to floor ;  
And I who read them o'er and o'er,  
Am I much wiser than of old,  
When sunlight leaped like living gold  
Into my boyhood's heart, on fire  
With fervid hope and wild desire ;  
And when behind no window bars,  
But free as air I served the stars ?

JUSTIN HUNTLEY MCCARTHY.



## A CLOSED BOOK.

I TURN the leaves over, page by page,  
 Then I close the book with a sudden pang.  
 You read me that poem,—some long past age !  
 I remember yet how the dear voice rang.

Will the book have sorrow that darkness lies  
 Pressed down on the leaves where the words are  
 writ ?  
 Will it cry with a yearning to see the eyes  
 That once looked light to the heart of it ?

If my heart could be closed thus, shut like a book,  
 Forgetful of you, and the eyes that beam,—  
 But you wakened life with the love of your look,  
 And I in my darkness must dream and dream.

WILLIAM P. MCKENZIE.



## DE LIBRIS.

TRUE—there are books and books. There's  
 Gray,  
 For instance, and there's Bacon ;  
 There's Longfellow, and Monstrelet,  
 And also Colton's "Lacon,"  
 With "Laws of Whist," and those of Libel,  
 And Euclid, and the Mormon Bible.

And some are dear as friends, and some  
    We keep because we need them ;  
And some we ward from worm and thumb,  
    And love too well to read them.  
My own are poor, and mostly new,  
But I've an Elzevir or two.

That as a gift is prized, the next  
    For trouble in the finding ;  
This Aldine for its early text,  
    That Plantin for the binding ;  
This sorry Herrick hides a flower,  
The record of one perfect hour.

But whether it be worth or looks  
    We gently love or strongly,  
Such virtue doth reside in books  
    We scarce can love them wrongly ;  
To sages an eternal school,  
A hobby (harmless) to the fool.

Nor altogether fool is he  
    Who orders, free from doubt,  
Those books which "no good library  
    Should ever be without,"  
And blandly locks the well-glazed door  
On tomes that issue never more.

Less may we scorn his cases grand,  
    Where safely, surely linger  
Fair virgin fields of type, unscanned  
    And innocent of finger,  
There rest, preserved from dust accurst,  
The first editions—and the worst.

And least of all should we that write  
 With easy jest deride them,  
 Who hope to leave, when "lost to sight,"  
 The best of us inside them.  
 Dear shrines ! where many a scribbler's name  
 Has lasted—longer than his fame.

COSMO MONKHOUSE.



L'ENVOI.

HERE are we for the last time face to face,  
 Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee  
 speed

Upon that perilous journey to that place  
 For which I have done on thee pilgrim's weed,  
 Striving to get thee all things for thy need—  
 — I love thee, whatso time or men may say  
 Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en if thou  
 Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears on ;  
 For ever as thy fashioning did grow,  
 Kind word and praise because of thee I won  
 From those without whom were my world all gone,  
 My hope fallen dead, my singing cast away,  
 And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee ; yet this last time must it be  
 That thou must hold thy peace and I must speak,  
 Lest if thou babble I begin to see  
 Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart too weak,  
 To find the land thou goest forth to seek—

—Though what harm if thou die upon the way,  
Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never reach,  
Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet, or death ;  
Therefore a word unto thee would I teach  
To answer these, who, noting thy weak breath,  
Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little faith,  
May make thy fond desire a sport and play,  
Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the road  
thereto?

Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou know'st it  
not ;

Surely no book of verse I ever knew  
But ever was the heart within him hot  
To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot,—  
There, now we both laugh,—as the whole world may,  
At us poor singers of an empty day.

Nay, let it pass, and hearken ! Hast thou heard  
That therein I believe I have a friend,  
Of whom for love I may not be afeard?  
It is to him indeed I bid thee wend ;  
Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere thou end,  
Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,  
Thou idle singer of an empty day !

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the road,  
And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,  
Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load,  
My master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou do meet,  
Then shalt thou win a space of rest full sweet ;

Then be thou bold, and speak the words I say,  
The idle singer of an empty day !

\* \* \* \*

[*The seven stanzas omitted here contain the Book's  
address to Chaucer.*]

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou mayst  
gain

Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof thou die ?  
Nay, it shall not be.—Thou mayst toil in vain,  
And never draw the House of Fame anigh ;  
Yet he and his shall know whereof we cry,  
Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay  
The ghosts that crowd about life's empty day

Then let the others go ! and if indeed  
In some old garden thou and I have wrought,  
And made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded seed,  
And fragrance of old days and deed have brought  
Back to folk weary ; all was not for nought.  
—No little part it was for me to play—  
The idle singer of an empty day.

WILLIAM MORRIS.



TO G. LAURENCE GOMME, F.S.A., ON HIS  
PRESENTING ME WITH A COPY OF  
ANDREW LANG'S "LETTERS TO DEAD  
AUTHORS."

O FRIEND, receive my thanks for Letters writ  
To Authors Dead by Andrew Lang, who  
writes

To each dead master in the strain most fit  
To speak his loving homage, and indites

Therewith memorials of his perfect taste  
And soul of art in times of shallow haste.

If chosen friends reveal the mind of man,  
That seeks for fellows of its noblest powers,  
A hero's mind beneath the words we scan  
Here clothes itself for us in learning's flowers ;  
Not less heroic for that undismayed  
Its deepest thought in smiles it has arrayed.

The age is dull for all its wealth, and sad  
Man's nimble spirit 'neath a blight e'en droops  
Of luxury, where wit its domain had  
In times of patches, farthingales and hoops :  
While penury, with labour yoked, can see  
No heaven on earth save that same luxury !

In such a time, my friend, it is most good  
To meet a mind so full and yet so calm,  
To sit and taste the literary food  
That fed this mind, and share its balm :  
The glancing wit of other realms and times  
Doth Andrew Lang give us in prose and rhymes !

Ah ! when some future Andrew writes to *him*,  
How rapturously he'll applaud that style  
That flushes now the heights, and now a whim  
Or paradox will try to make us smile !  
The Immortals call—but, Andrew, stay on earth,  
That of bright wit there be no longer dearth !

T. FAIRMAN ORDISH.

## ÓLD BOOKS.

A THRESHER prime is Father Time !  
 When harvest loads his wain,  
 He beats the hollow husks aside  
 And hoards the golden grain.

A winnower is Father Time !  
 The chaff he blows away ;  
 The sweetest seed he treasures up  
 For many a year and day.

Oh, very wise is Father Time !  
 His flail is tried and true ;  
 I love the garnered pile of books  
 He's winnowed through and through.

SELINA WARE PAINE.



## AMONG MY BOOKS.

A MONG my books—what rest is there  
 From wasting woes ! what balm for care !  
 If ill's appal or clouds hang low,  
 And drooping dim the fleeting show,  
 I revel still in visions rare.

At will I breathe the classic air,  
 The wanderings of Ulysses share ;  
 Or see the plume of Bayard flow  
 Among my books.

Whatever face the world may wear—  
If Lilian has no smile to spare,  
For others let her beauty blow ;  
Such favours I can well forgo ;  
Perchance forget the frowning fair  
Among my books.

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.



INFLUENCE OF BOOKS.

IN the still book-world rests the noiseless hour  
That moves the noisy throngèd world for  
ever.

JOHN JAMES PIATT.



WRITTEN IN THE "GOLDEN TREASURY  
OF SONGS AND LYRICS."

HIDDEN here with hearts of song,  
Live the poets, always young ;—  
Read them, Mabel, through and through :  
They will give their hearts to you.

ERNEST RHYS.



WRITTEN IN A COPY OF WORDSWORTH.

IN the hottest crowd, when grace  
Seems to hide her maiden face,  
Here you'll find a mystic voice  
Full of heaven's supernal noise,  
And a breath of mountain wind  
Rustling in the leaves you'll find :



In the world's seducing clan  
 It shall be your talisman,—  
 Keep it, Percy, long in honour  
 Of its author (and its donor) !

ERNEST RHYS.



IN THE MASTER'S ROOM.

THE business of the day is done,  
 A pipe emits a faint perfume ;  
 The master of the house hath won  
 His quiet hour within his room.

The flames upon the hearth at play  
 Bring out the pictures on the wall,  
 The papers piled in disarray,  
 The books that on each other fall.

Each volume wears a kindly face,  
 As of a true and trusty friend ;  
 Battered maybe, devoid of grace,  
 But frank of converse, free to lend.

Dryden and "Druid," side by side,  
 The poet and the sportsman pen ;  
 See Nana, blushing, seek to hide  
 Behind a row of Reverend men.

A lawyer's lease has business with  
 A manuscript of schoolboy rhymes ;  
 Beneath the works of Adam Smith  
 Are copies of the *Sporting Times*.

To meet the light there lowly stoop  
 Some copies of Salvator's views ;  
 In yon alcove's a marble group,  
 A Nymph, a Naiad, and a Muse.

Near Paley's placid brow a brush—  
 (Eh ! but it was a stout old fox)—  
 Nell Gwynne is making Cromwell blush,  
 Queen Mary has a smile for Knox.

What dynasties domestic reign,  
 What cook may come, what governess go,  
 Here is the master's small domain,  
*Imperium in imperio.*

C. C. RHYS.



#### TWO BOOKS.

BRIGHT as the crimson glow when love  
 First sends a missive to a maiden,  
 Keen as the miser's glance above  
 A bag with golden moneys laden ;  
 So bright upon the author's cheek,  
 So keen beneath the author's brow,  
 The glow and glance that plainly speak  
 His book in print has reached him now.

His book—his first-born—(who does not  
 Some little paper thing remember  
 That formed a young life's beauty spot  
 From January to Decèmber?)

How tenderly he turns the leaves  
 That have for him a nameless charm,  
 And reads from them on summer eves  
 To some one hanging on his arm !

How Nature seems to share his joy !  
 How every breeze to whisper presage  
 Of future fame to glad the boy,  
 As boy-like he receives the message !  
 Mind like a fountain overflows  
 With wisdom, fancy, wealth of thought,  
 Ere yet the world with all its woes  
 The lesson of his life has taught.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

The lesson of his life he's learned ;  
 Well-worn is now that writing-table ;  
 The visions of his youth have turned  
 (As visions will) into a fable.  
 He's very old. His head is white,—  
 His hand is weary, heart is sore.  
 He's very old. Yet must he write ;—  
 The printer's devil's at the door.

He thinks this book must be his last ;—  
 'Twill pay his funeral expenses ;—  
 His energy for work is past,  
 A numbness stiffens all his senses.  
 When suddenly all pain has gone !  
 At sight of some few flowers of spring  
 A kindly hand has laid upon  
 His table—they such memories bring.

*The Bookworm's Pledge.* 101

He writes. A flower of faded breath  
Falls where the last uncertain line is ;  
And lo ! it is the pen of Death  
That on the page has written "Finis."  
The lamp is out. Poor slave, farewell !  
You and your work have had their day.  
No published line your end shall tell ;—  
That printer's boy can go his way.

C. C. RHYS.



THE BOOKWORM'S PLEDGE.

I PLEDGED my word this morning,  
As I started down the street,  
That not a single book I'd buy—  
For me a wondrous feat.

As I wandered past the windows  
Of the news-stands on the way,  
With scarce a wish to purchase,  
I my mandate could obey.

But temptation, ever ready  
To hold her victims fast,  
In the guise of an old book store,  
Filled with relics of the past,

Dawned upon my willing vision,  
And I thought she'll never mind  
If I glance within a moment  
And perhaps some treasure find.

Ah, behold how fortune teases,  
What a glorious prize is here !  
First edition, not a blemish,  
Rare old volume of Shakespeare.

Ah, I pledged my word this morning,  
And to keep it I will try,  
But the gods will frown upon me  
Should I let that chance pass by.

There on yonder shelf inviting  
Rests a missal old and quaint,  
Relic of the Gothic ages  
Scanned by some mediæval saint ;

Missal with the blazoned pages,  
Triumph of the ancient art,  
With your worn old vellum covers,  
How you tempt my sinful heart !

Close beside it, dim and dusty,  
Bearing imprint of the years  
They have whirled along life's current,  
Stand two priceless Elzevirs.

I pledged my word this morning,  
But the keeping is too dear ;  
I would be far more than mortal,  
Could I leave those volumes here.

Shades of bookmen who behold me,  
Oh, forgive my perjured self ;  
You would leave your seat in glory  
For a peep at yonder shelf.

C. D. RAYMER.

## A POOR AUTHOR TO HIS BOOKS.

DEAR comrades! though ye figure not in  
Lowndes

(Thy costlier brethren long have left their home),  
How are ye ravished from me, tome by tome,  
For fewer shillings than ye cost me pounds!  
Shades of unthrifty authors! Hark, it sounds!  
My portal tells, a tedious metronome,  
Of sullen duns who onewhile forced to roam  
Kit Marlowe, Savage, Johnson, Goldsmith:  
Zounds!

Dim days of quiet pleasure that are fled!  
Once, snugly harboured, dallying by turns  
With new and old, in such pure peace I read  
As one who, want unknowing, idly learns.  
Now in yon gaping casement widely spread  
Stand Shakespeare only, Landor, Lamb and  
Burns.

ERNEST RADFORD.



## THE CENSOR.

SHE'S a priestess of Minerva,  
With a scorn of lighter things;  
And no idle smile can swerve her,  
For she guards Pierian springs;  
And she draws the sparkling waters  
For the learned and the weak,  
Giving maidens "Beauty's Daughters,"  
And professors crabbed Greek.

In the library Fate's thrust her—  
 A sweet symphony in grey,  
 With soft eyes whose brilliant lustre  
 Fairly takes one's breath away.  
 But still she really seems to know  
 Each of the weighty tomes  
 That range from Kipling to De Foe,  
 From Homer up to Holmes.

If I ask for Herbert Spencer,  
 Or for Plato or Carlyle,  
 I can catch the pretty censor  
 In a faint approving smile ;  
 But at Anna Karénina,  
 Or the gay *contes* of France,  
 She wears a cold demeanour,  
 And a blushing, downcast glance.

HARRY ROMAINE.



#### WALDEN.

IN swift and sudden dreams each night I greet  
 The host of friends that in my heart I bear ;  
 I chat in paradox with Baudelaire,  
 I talk with Gautier of the obsolete—  
 My absinthe and De Musset's brandy meet ;  
 And by some special favour here and there,  
 Now with Elaine and now with Guinevere,  
 I pass the day in some serene retreat.  
 Heine's malicious eyes have gazed in mine,  
 And I have sat at Leopardi's feet.

And once I heard the lute-strung song divine  
That Sappho and the Lesbian girls repeat,  
But yet, what night have I not sought in vain  
To meet and muse with Emerson again?

EDGAR SALTUS.



AKOSMISM.

AS one who to some long-locked chamber goes,  
And listens there to what the dead have said,  
So there are moments when my thoughts are led  
To those dull chronicles whose pages close  
Epochs and ages in the same repose  
That shall the future as the past o'erspread,  
And where but Memory may tend the dead,  
Or prune the ivy where once grew the rose.  
And as there to me from their pages streams  
The incoherent story of the years,  
The aimlessness of all we undertake,  
I think our lives are surely but the dreams  
Of spirits dwelling in the distant spheres,  
Who, as we die, do one by one awake.

EDGAR SALTUS.



THE MARRIAGE OF CUPID AND PSYCHE.

(ED. ANDREW LANG.)

*On the Fly-leaf.*

CURSÈD be he who robs me of this book,  
With all his race. Let it be desolate  
And brought a-low if so be it was great,  
For that he, wickedly, impiously took



That was another's. Let great serpents look  
 At him, a-sleeping, with dull eyes of Hate ;  
 And let him, waking, be compelled of Fate  
 To cast his corse within the nearest brook.  
 Here is a book made after mine own heart—  
 Good print, good tale, good picture and good  
     sense,  
 Good learning and good labour of old days.  
 Book ! thou and I henceforth must nowise part.  
 Together we will tread Life's journey hence,  
 And only part at old Death's waterways.

CHARLES SAYLE.



DEMANDING AN INSCRIPTION IN AN  
 "OMAR KHAYYAM."

To J. H. B.

HASTE, Jack, to write your name in yonder  
     book :  
 And yet write not, for when you are a-near  
 No need there is of pen and ink to cheer  
 Our meeting. And yet write, for herein, look,  
 There is upon this page a tempting nook  
     Where you shall hum a quatrain clear and dear  
     To him who holds your book in after year :—  
 Write it I swear you shall by hook or crook.  
 Nay, write it not, for what may prove to be  
     Most perfect is the fittest. So put back  
     Our Omar, *sans* inscription, on the shelf.  
 What need is there of further poesy  
     When all our lifetime we've possession, Jack,  
     Of one more perfect poem,—of yourself ?

CHARLES SAYLE.

## TRIOLET OF THE BIBLIOPHILE.

BE it mine to peruse  
 Old prints and editions ;  
 Books our fathers might use  
 Be it mine to peruse.  
 Let others hunt news  
 And go mad about missions :—  
 Be it mine to peruse  
 Old prints and editions.

CHARLES SAYLE.



## IN THE LIBRARY.

FRÓM the oriels one by one  
 Slowly fades the setting sun ;  
 On the marge of afternoon  
 Stands the new-born crescent moon ;  
 In the twilight's crimson glow  
 Dim the quiet alcoves grow.  
 Drowsy-lidded Silence smiles  
 On the long deserted aisles ;  
 Out of every shadowy nook  
 Spirit faces seem to look,  
 Some with smiling eyes, and some  
 With a sad entreaty dumb ;  
 He who shepherded his sheep  
 On the wild Sicilian steep,  
 He above whose grave are set  
 Sprays of Roman violet ;  
 Poets, sages,—all who wrought  
 In the crucible of thought.

Day by day as seasons glide  
 On the great eternal tide,  
 Noiselessly they gather thus  
 In the twilight beauteous,  
 Hold communion each with each,  
 Closer than our earthly speech,  
 Till within the East are born  
 Premonitions of the morn !

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



## A POET TO HIS BOOK.

BOOK, now that thou art fain to go  
 To brave the critic's gibe or blow,  
 And seek if haply thou may'st find  
 A smile of welcome, cordial, kind—  
 One word, but one, before we part,  
 And hold it, prithee, fast at heart.

If so it chance that thou shouldst meet  
 No friendly glance in stall or street,  
 Despair not, nor with fate demur ;  
 For when the tender eyes of her  
 Lean o'er thee, thou wilt wish than this  
 No other meed of praise or bliss.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



## THE BOOKSTALL.

IT stands in a winding street,  
 A quiet and restful nook,  
 Apart from the endless beat  
 Of the noisy heart of Trade ;

There's never a spot more cool  
Of a hot midsummer day  
By the brink of a forest pool,  
Or the bank of a crystal brook,  
In the maples' breezy shade,  
Than the bookstall old and grey.

Here are precious gems of thought  
That were quarried long ago,  
Some in vellum bound, and wrought  
With letters and lines of gold ;  
Here are curious rows of " calf,"  
And perchance an Elzevir ;  
Here are countless " mos " of chaff,  
And a parchment folio,  
Like leaves that are crackled with cold  
All puckered and brown and sere.

In every age and clime  
Live the monarchs of the brain :  
And the lords of prose and rhyme,  
Years after the long last sleep  
Has come to the kings of earth  
And their names have passed away,  
Rule on through death and birth ;  
And the thrones of their domain  
Are found where the shades are deep,  
In the bookstall old and grey.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



CONFESSIO AMANTIS.  
AMATOR : AMATA : MATER.

## I.

BY the boudoir fire we're sitting,  
Shadows from the fire are flitting,  
Creeping, crawling, sweeping, sprawling  
O'er the ceiling ; night is falling  
On the dreary drizzling day ;  
Kettledrum is cleared away.

## II.

Half-past five : we dine at seven—  
One clear hour at least of heaven.  
No ; Nell has a book ! I'll find one.  
Why will memory remind one  
That one hasn't read a thing  
Since the other evening ?

## III.

Faust—by Goethe—Part the Second,—  
Masterpiece by critics reckoned ;  
I could never understand it,—  
Could the master-mind that plann'd it ?  
Two slim feet upon the mat  
Interest me more than that.

## IV.

“ Poet at the Breakfast-Table,”  
Light and vigorous and able—  
Why on earth will glances wander,  
With attention four times fonder,  
To the shapely hands that grasp  
“ Enoch Arden ” in their clasp ?

V.

Good ! Here is the triple story—  
Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory :  
Madonna Beatrice, brave old Dante,  
Grace I crave for homage scanty ;  
    Why should ye be dim to-night  
    If a red mouth's teeth are white ?

VI.

Landor, thy belovèd pages  
Bridge th' abysm of the ages ;  
Yet to-night they fail their duty ;  
Through Aspasia's boasted beauty,  
    Like a sunrise through a wood  
    Dawns sweet English maidenhood

VII.

Let me look at something sterner,  
Hallam, Stubbs, or Dawson Turner !  
Grand Monarque, and Reign of Terror,  
Bess's Glory, Charles's Error—  
    Each in dim confusion flies,  
    Scared away by two blue eyes.

VIII.

“ Adam Smith on Wealth of Nations,”  
Love is lost in calculations.  
Bees whose bags are full of money  
Do not gather love for honey ;  
    Business, enter if you dare !  
    What is gold to golden hair !

## IX.

“Six-fifteen? will you excuse me?”  
 “If your daughter won’t refuse me  
 Help in solving calculations  
 Made while reading ‘Wealth of Nations.’”  
 “Nellie will enjoy it.” Flown—  
 Nell and I are left alone!

## X.

“Westward Ho!” is vastly pretty,—  
 Burning Frank and Rose, a pity;  
 Beautiful they look together  
 Dying. I’m not certain whether  
     I would not be burnt, to see  
     Somebody as close to me.

## XI.

Nellie’s very rapt in reading;  
 Diligence I hate impeding,  
 Yet has she, for all that’s rapt her,  
 Not got through a single chapter.  
     I must beg for Nellie’s aid  
     Calculations to be made.

## XII.

“Three years past, come this December—  
 (You no doubt will not remember)  
 I, a schoolboy, loved you madly,  
 Talked of dying for you gladly;  
     Most of all, I would declare,  
     Captive to your eyes and hair.

XIII.

"Now your eyes look sweet and tender ;  
Does the fireglow yield them splendour ?  
And your hair shines richer golden ;  
Is it to the flames beholden ?  
And your face looks very fair ;  
Have the embers influence there ?

XIV.

"Nay, I swear, I think you're blushing—  
Never fire made such a flushing.  
And your eyes are bright and pelting—  
Never fire made such a melting.  
Would you take it very ill,  
If I said I loved you still ?

XV.

"Sweet, if you must fall, my bosom  
Shall receive the falling blossom.  
If the tears must rain, the shower  
Raining here will feed the flower.  
If your weakness needs support  
Nature made me stronger for't.

XVI.

"Kiss me, Nellie. I'll not owe it,—  
No such banker as the poet ;  
Nay, invest your fund of kissing—  
Interest cent. per cent.—none missing.  
Tears and smiles. Just one kiss more !  
Have you looked as fair before ? "



## XVII.

By the boudoir fire we're sitting ;  
 Shadows from the fire are flitting  
 O'er the ceiling.—Struck eleven !  
 Dinner's always sharp at seven !  
     Goodness ! here is bedtime come !  
     Gentle Household, blind and dumb !

DOUGLAS SLADEN.



## LE ORDRE DE BEL EYSE.

1630.

FIRST we love fair ladies,  
     Then we love good books ;  
 Either have their virtues,  
     Either have their vices ;  
 These are to divert us,  
     Those are to entice us ;  
 Books outlive their pages,  
     Ladies their good looks.

Next we love sweet music  
     And the festive dance ;  
 Music makes us merry,  
     Dancing glows with pleasure ;  
 Either salutary,  
     Taken in good measure ;  
 Joy's the only physic  
     That is worth its pence.

And we love good liquor,  
Be it from the Rhine,  
Cyder press'd in Devon,  
Or fat College ale.  
Nectar's drunk in heaven,  
Whisky by the Gael ;  
Herrick—he's the Vicar—  
Says they're all divine.

Last, and most devoutly,  
Love we a good friend,  
One to mourn and miss us  
When we've burst our bubbles,  
Share in our successes,  
And not shun our troubles.  
Whoso does this stoutly,  
Love him to the end.

DOUGLAS SLADEN.



MY PRESENTATION BOOK-CASE.

(WITH APOLOGIES TO ROSSETTI'S SONNET : "A  
SUPERScription.")

LOOK on my shelves—the realm of Might-  
have-been :

And yet right glad am I they hold no knell,  
Are undusk'd o'er with shadows of farewell—  
But one and every book's alive with the sheen  
Of Life and Art and what of each is seen.

Look on my shelves : lo, an enduring spell  
To lure collectors' hopes intolerable :  
Of loveliest thoughts and dreams the bookish  
screen.

Mark me, what dust there is ! But should there  
 dart

Along these rows the Bookman's eager eyes

Lit with a first-edition-glow surmise—

Then shalt thou see me ope, and turn apart

These frail glazed doors, and rend thy inmost  
 heart

With many a rare unpurchasable prize.

WILLIAM SHARP.



#### SEVEN AGES OF A BOOK.

ALL the world's a book,  
 And all the men and women clearly  
 authors :

They have their contents and their indices,  
 And one man in his time writes many parts—

His volume having seven ages. At first

The paper, white as the frost on famous

Alpine peaks. Enriched by rapid flow

Of magic ink, sheet after sheet it gleams

With gems of thought and glistening coin

Of fancy. Then the complete script,

Paragraphed and paged, revised and neatly  
 bundled

For the mail, labelled with postage stamps, it goes

Direct to haunts of type and pressrooms popular.

And then the finished work, fresh from

The printer's hands, gilded on upper edge,

Well bound in skin or cloth of colours variable ;

*Old School-book's Lament.* 117

Side lettered and bedight with flowerets wreathed  
By art's luxuriant limnings.  
Then the oft-read and oft-discarded tale,  
Whose crumpled, rose-stained leaves  
Attest how little heed fair woman pays  
To literary preservation. Then high  
On shelf, amid dust's gathering grime,  
The tome is placed for later reference.  
Its sixth age shifts into forgotten lore—  
Battered and curled and torn beyond repair ;  
A cover gone ; no title left to tell  
The character of work, or who were  
Its producers. Last scene of all,  
Which closes this strange history,  
Is sad to view and borders on oblivion :  
The loose and separate leaves are used  
To wrap up soap or other cheap domestic requisition.  
In grocer's clutch the o'er-true story ends—  
*Sans* plot, *sans* grace, *sans* sense, *sans* form,  
*Sans* everything.

JACQUES HENRI SHAKESQUILL.



OLD SCHOOL-BOOK'S LAMENT.

I'M a castaway fellow, all dingy and yellow,  
Forsaken I lie on the dark garret floor ;  
All wretched and lonely, for now I am only  
A mere wreck of what was a beauty before.

My pride is all shattered, my leaves they are  
battered,

And all of them cruelly scribbled and torn.

I have but one cover, they tore off the other—

And that one is dreadfully battered and worn.

An old-fashioned bonnet, a faded rose on it,

A rusty jack-knife, a shoe out at the toe,

A pile of old papers, three dirty wax tapers,

Are my only companions in these hours of woe.

Once I lived in a city, where books bright and  
pretty

Were ranged in a long shining row on the shelf.

I'd an exquisite cover, gilt-lettered all over,

And not one was more beautiful there than  
myself.

My next place of dwelling—I blush at the telling—

Was a schoolroom as dusty as dusty could be,

Where long I was studied, scratched, thumb-  
marked and muddied,

And ruined as any one plainly can see.

But here I am lying, degraded and dying,

While old dusty cobwebs are covering me o'er,

Alone and forsaken, while naught can awaken

The glory I knew in the sweet days of yore.

LILLIE SHELDON.



## THE LIBRARY.

**G**IVE me the room whose every nook  
 Is dedicated to a book :  
 Two windows will suffice for air  
 And grant the light admission there ;  
 One looking to the south, and one  
 To speed the red departing sun ;  
 The eastern wall from frieze to plinth  
 Shall be the Poet's labyrinth,  
 Where one may find the lords of rhyme  
 From Homer's down to Dobson's time :  
 And at the northern side a space  
 Shall show an open chimney-place,  
 Set round with ancient tiles that tell  
 Some legend old, and weave a spell  
 About the firedog-guarded seat,  
 Where, musing, one may taste the heat :  
 Above, the mantel should not lack  
 For curios and bric-à-brac—  
 Not much, but just enough to light  
 The room up when the fire is bright.  
 The volumes on the wall should be  
 All prose and all philosophy,  
 From Plato down to those who are  
 The dim reflections of that star ;  
 And these tomes all should serve to show  
 How much we write—how little know ;  
 For since the problem once was set  
 No one has ever solved it yet.  
 Upon the shelves along the west  
 The scientific works shall rest,

Beside them, History ; above,—  
 Religion—hope, and faith, and love :  
 Lastly, the southern wall should hold  
 The story-tellers, new and old ;  
 Haroun al Raschid, who was truth  
 And happiness to all my youth,  
 Shall have the honoured place of all  
 That dwell upon the sunny wall ;  
 And with him there shall stand a throng  
 Of those who help mankind along  
 More by their fascinating lies  
 Than all the learning of the wise.

Such be the library ; and take  
 This motto of a Latin make,  
 To grace the door through which I pass :  
*Hic habitat Felicitas !*

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



#### FORGOTTEN BOOKS

OF books I sing, but not of those  
 Which any Book Collector knows,—  
 The priceless, rare editions, not,—  
 But volumes which the World forgot  
 And with them those who wrote, as well,  
 Before they had a chance to sell :  
 Ephemerals that find themselves  
 With the Immortals on my shelves

I name no names, for if I should  
None would recall them now, nor could  
A word of mine bring any one  
Out of its long Oblivion.  
The ink on many fly-leaves still  
Looks quite as fresh as when the quill  
On each inscribed an author's name,  
And signed his title there to Fame,  
Without one solitary fear  
About its being proven clear.

One has its pages still uncut,  
Clean, kept ironically shut  
By him whose name therein is penned  
Above : *From his devoted friend.*  
And not unfrequently I come  
Across the imprint of a thumb,  
Or in the paragraphs I find  
A pleasing sentence underlined,  
Or neatly on the margin set  
A compliment in epithet :  
Each one of these, I'm satisfied,  
Was read before its author died.

But there was one among them all,  
Morocco-bound, gilt-edged, and small,  
Filled with the amatory rhymes  
Of ante-Tennysonian times,  
Stiff in their phraseology  
And rather rough in melody.  
'Tis *Dedicated unto Her*  
*By Her Unworthie Worshipper,*



And just below is written : “ *These  
Many and pleasing Melodies  
Dear Wm. writ in '98,  
& unto Me did Dedicate.* ”

This one was read and read again,  
And annotated by her pen :  
And this fulfilled the Author's hopes,  
Repaid the toil of all his tropes,  
And had, at least his span of life,  
One constant reader in his wife.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



#### TO HIS BOOK.

G O, little book, with heart of rhyme,  
This is our last leave-taking time :  
For you the journey stretches long,  
With naught to cheer you save a song ;  
For me, alas ! when you depart,  
A doubtful, desolated heart.  
I have but slender hope to give  
To gladden such a fugitive.  
The world may greet you well or ill,  
Seeing your way lies all up hill :  
But o'er that summit dim and far  
I catch a glimpse of one sure star  
Which shines to guide you and to bring  
You ever closer there to sing.  
Little I care for praise or blame  
Unless it whispers of her name :

*The Fly-Leaf to the Reader.* 123

Her praise is inspiration's breath ;  
Her scorn were aspiration's death !  
Go, then, and if she welcome you  
I care not what the world may do !

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



THE FLY-LEAF TO THE READER.

FRIEND, stay your steps awhile before  
You pass within the open door ;  
Bethink you in what manner you  
Shall greet the host ; consider, too,  
How to a feast of all his best  
The author here invites his guest,  
To taste his meat and drink his wine,  
On every dish to freely dine.  
And, mind you, when you come to sit  
Before the board whereon his wit  
And wisdom are all spread to make  
A meal for your mind's stomach's sake,  
To bear yourself with dignity  
And treat your host with courtesy.

If any dish before you placed  
By any chance offend your taste,  
Or, if the food seem wanting aught  
Of proper seasoning, say naught.  
Eat quietly, and when you go  
Forget not gratitude to show ;

And, being gone, if you repent  
The precious time that you have spent,  
Or think that you have poorly fared  
Upon the food and drink prepared,  
Curse not this book—the wine and meat  
So kindly offered you to eat.  
The author, too, spare from your curse,  
And do not go from bad to worse ;  
You were his guest, this recollect,  
And treat him only with respect.  
Keep your opinions to yourself,  
And put the book back on the shelf.  
Think this : what one may eat, and die,  
Another's taste may satisfy.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



THE BOOK-HUNTER.

A CUP of coffee, eggs, and rolls  
Sustain him on his morning strolls :  
Unconscious of the passers-by,  
He trudges on with downcast eye ;  
He wears a queer old hat and coat,  
Suggestive of a style remote ;  
His manner is preoccupied,—  
A shambling gait, from side to side.  
For him the sleek, bright-windowed shop  
Is all in vain,—he does not stop.  
His thoughts are fixed on dusty shelves  
Where musty volumes hide themselves,—

Rare prints of poetry and prose,  
And quaintly-lettered folios,—  
Perchance a parchment manuscript,  
In some forgotten corner slipped,  
Or monk-illuminated missal bound  
In vellum with brass clasps around ;  
These are the pictured things that throng  
His mind the while he walks along.

A dingy street, a cellar dim,  
With book-lined walls, suffices him.  
The dust is white upon his sleeves ;  
He turns the yellow, dog-eared leaves  
With just the same religious look  
That priests give to the Holy Book.  
He does not heed the stifling air  
If so he find a treasure there.  
He knows rare books, like precious wines,  
Are hidden where the sun ne'er shines ;  
For him delicious flavours dwell  
In books as in old Muscatel ;  
He finds in features of the type  
A clew to prove the grape was ripe.  
And when he leaves this dismal place,  
Behold, a smile lights up his face !  
Upon his cheeks a genial glow,—  
Within his hand Boccaccio,  
A first edition worn with age,  
“ *Firenze* ” on the title-page.

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

## A BALLADE OF BOOKS WELL BOUND.

FROM tattered volumes old and sere  
Some friends I know evolve delight.  
The shabbiest oft most prized appear  
By antiquarians erudite.  
These think me a Philistine wight  
For liking bindings of the best ;  
Yet to my taste I have a right :  
I like to see my friends well drest.

I love the antique and the queer,  
The curious, quaint, and recondite.  
I own the spell of Elzevir,  
The charm of pages Aldine hight ;  
But yet, though age and dirt invite,  
Their beauty is not manifest.  
Let modern art put them to flight.  
I like to see my friends well drest.

Of Bedford, Tout, and Rivière  
I love the leathern marvels bright ;  
Levant and polished calf, though dear  
To purse, and dearer to the sight.  
The armour of the bravest knight  
Should shine the brightest on his breast ;  
No rust of age should cast its blight.  
I like to see my friends well drest.

L'ENVOI.

Friend, I dislike in sorry flight  
To see a loved and honoured guest;  
In goodly garb I'd have him dight :  
I like to see my friends well drest.

HARRY B. SMITH.



WITH A COPY OF THE ILIAD.

BAYARD, awaken not this music strong  
While round thy home the indolent sweet  
breeze

Floats lightly as the summer breath of seas  
O'er which Ulysses heard the Sirens' song !  
Dreams of low-lying isles to June belong,  
And Circe holds us in her haunts of ease ;  
But later, when these high ancestral trees  
Are sere, and such Odyssean languors wrong  
The reddening strength of the autumnal year,  
Yield to heroic words thine ear and eye :  
Intent on these broad pages thou shalt hear  
The trumpet's blare, the Argive battle-cry,  
And see Achilles hurl his hurtling spear,  
And mark the Trojan arrows make reply.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.



## PATERNOSTER ROW.

WHO, though with soul that else were scarce  
divined,

But feels it flutter as he lingers here,

And looks around ? The very atmosphere

Seems redolent and mineral of mind ;

Within ten thousand thousand cells enshrined,

From every flower that blows, what sumptuous  
store !

From every varied vein of mental ore

Riches of riches of what wealth combined !

“ Our Father,” certes, of the heaven of thought,

Dispensing wideimperishable food

To hungry souls ; full fount that knows no  
drought ;

Illimitable power of sovereign good,

Binding strange peoples in close brotherhood,

With bonds ne’er yet by guilds or kinship  
wrought.

ROBERT STEGGALL.



## AN OLD BOOKSTALL.

MOTLEY assemblage ! some but in their teens,  
And others centuries old ! contrasts com-  
bined—

The *magnum opus* of a sovereign mind,

Rubbing against plebeian magazines ;

Pulpit and stage, too close for go-betweens ;

Greek, cheek by jowl with Cockney ; every kind

Of raff in company the most refined ;

*The Land of Story-Books.* 129

While Faith on Doubt and Heterodoxy leans !  
Could they but speak, themselves might, haply,  
tell

Full many a story, preach more wisdom, more  
Of human wont, than all the literal lore  
Therein compacted ; what quaint haunts have they  
Not known—what various friends—what change,  
decay—

Witnessed what joy and woe ineffable !

ROBERT STEGGALL



THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS.

A T evening when the lamp is lit,  
Around the fire my parents sit ;  
They sit at home and talk and sing,  
But do not play at anything.

Now with my little gun I crawl  
All in the dark around the wall,  
And follow round the forest track  
Away behind the sofa back.

There in the night, where none can spy,  
All in my hunter's camp I lie,  
And play at books that I have read  
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,  
These are my starry solitudes ;  
And there the river by whose brink  
The roaring lions come to drink.



I see the others far away,  
As if in firelit camp they lay,  
And I, like to an Indian scout,  
Around their party prowled about.

So when my nurse comes in for me,  
Home I return across the sea,  
And go to bed with backward looks  
At my dear land of story-books.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



#### PICTURE-BOOKS IN WINTER.

SUMMER fading, winter comes—  
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,  
Window robins, winter rooks,  
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone  
Nurse and I can walk upon ;  
Still we find the flowing brooks  
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by  
Wait upon the children's eye,  
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,  
In the picture story-books.

*The Lay of the Wily Villain.* 131

We may see how all things are,  
Seas and cities, near and far,  
And the flying fairies' looks  
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,  
Happy chimney-corner days,  
Sitting sage in nursery nooks  
Reading picture story-books?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



THE LAY OF THE WILY VILLAIN.

THE furtive sneak who filches from  
The bookstall's dingy rows,  
Should by the ears be nailed aloft,  
Along with kites and crows.

Now listen, ye who covet books,  
But don't know where to buy 'em,  
Of one who played much deeper tricks—  
But pray don't go and try 'em.

In London's dingiest, bookiest street,  
Not far off from the Strand,  
There dwelt a man who dealt in books,  
Short-sighted, wise and bland.

He had a partner for his help,  
Far-seeing, pompous, bluff,  
A man whom e'en his enemy  
Would never call a tuff.

These twain, for want of better names,  
Sluther we'll call, and Slyum—  
Now, gentle reader, pray don't try :  
You can't identify 'em.

This worthy pair a client had,  
Who, in his earlier days,  
Had honest been, but, losing tone,  
Fell into wicked ways ;

And straying far, and stumbling oft  
O'er moral hill and hummock,  
He came at last to filch a book,  
To fill an empty stomach.

And this is how he did the deed  
(Now, "gentle," don't you try it,  
For though he took the book by guile,  
He certainly did buy it) :

He wandered into Sluther's shop,  
As in the days gone by,  
Where many a goodly tome he'd bought,  
At prices fairly high ;

And after passing round the shelves,  
As was his wont of yore,  
He chose a volume, small but rare,  
Worth shillings p'r'aps a score.

Then turning with abstracted air  
To where poor Sluther stood,  
He said, " You'll put it down to me  
And Sluther said he would.

Their shop was long and low and dim,  
The front was ruled by Sluther ;  
While Slyum " kept the books " and dwelt  
In darkness at the other.

Our villain pushed his wicked way,  
Past connoisseur and gull,  
To where old Slyum kept accounts ;  
For Sluther's shop was full.

And there with conversation bland,  
And specious balderdash,  
He showed his book to Slyum, and—  
He sold it him for cash !

If furtive sneaks, who help themselves  
To books from stalls and boxes,  
Are treated like the kites and crows,  
What should be done with foxes ?

ELLIOT STOCK.



HONE'S EVERY-DAY BOOK.

WHEN wandering through some stately gal-  
lery,  
Where pictures, gleaned from various times and  
lands,  
Harvest the labours of the noblest hands  
Trained by long toil to highest mastery,

We linger, greeting with a glad surprise  
 The presence of so many well-known friends,  
 Who each in turn for our reception lends  
 A festival for mind and ears and eyes ;  
 Yet as we, satiate, leave the kindly roof  
 Of him who garnered for our pleasuring,  
 We count the beauty but a little thing  
 That spent and spread for our ingrate behoof.  
 Good reader, when this well-filled book you close,  
 Bless the deft hand that all its treasures chose.

ELLIOT STOCK.



#### COMPANIONS.

"A French writer (whom I love well) speaks of three kinds of companions, men, women and books."—SIR JOHN DAVYS.

WE have companions, comrade mine ;  
 Jolly good fellows, tried and true,  
 Are filling their cups with the Rhenish wine,  
 And pledging each other, as I do you.  
 Never a man in all the land  
 But has, in his hour of need, a friend,  
 Who stretches to him a helping hand,  
 And stands by him to the bitter end.  
 If not before, there is comfort then,  
 In the strong companionship of men.

But better than that, old friend of mine,  
 Is the love of woman, the life of life,  
 Whether in maiden's eyes it shine,  
 Or melts in the tender kiss of wife ;

A heart contented to feel, not know,  
That finds in the other its sole delight ;  
White hands that are loth to let us go,  
The tenderness that is more than might !  
On earth below, in heaven above,  
Is there anything better than woman's love ?

I do not say so, companion mine,  
For what, without it, would I be here ?  
It lightens my troubles, like this good wine,  
And, if I must weep, sheds tear for tear !  
But books, old friends that are always new,  
Of all good things that we know are best ;  
They never forsake us, as others do,  
And never disturb our inward rest.  
Here is truth in a world of lies,  
And all that in man is great and wise !

Better than men and women, friend,  
That are dust, though dear in our joy and pain,  
Are the books their cunning hands have penned,  
For they depart, but the books remain ;  
Through these they speak to us what was best  
In the loving heart and the noble mind ;  
All their royal souls possessed  
Belongs for ever to all mankind !  
When others fail him, the wise man looks  
To the sure companionship of books.

R. H. STODDARD.



## SONNET.

WITH A COPY OF "MADEMOISELLE DE MAUPIN."

THIS is the golden book of spirit and sense,  
 The holy writ of beauty ; he that wrought  
 Made it with dreams and faultless words and  
 thought

That seeks and finds and loses in the dense  
 Dim air of life that beauty's excellence  
 Wherewith love makes one hour of life distraught,  
 And all hours after follow and find not aught.  
 Here is that height of all love's eminence  
 Where man may breathe but for a breathing space,  
 And feel his soul burn as an altar-fire  
 To the unknown God of unachieved desire,  
 And from the middle mystery of the place  
 Watch lights that break, hear sounds as of a quire,  
 But see not twice unveiled the veiled God's face.

A. C. SWINBURNE.



## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

CROWNED, girdled, garbed and shod with  
 light and fire,  
 Son firstborn of the morning, sovereign star !  
 Soul nearest ours of all, that wert most far,  
 Most far off in the abysm of time, thy lyre  
 Hung highest above the dawn-enkindled quire  
 When all ye sang together, all that are,  
 And all the starry songs behind thy car  
 Rang sequence, All our souls acclaim thee sire.

“If all the pens that ever poets held  
Had fed the feeling of their masters’ thoughts,”  
And as with rush of hurtling chariots  
The flight of all their spirits were impelled  
Toward one great end, thy glory—nay, not then,  
Not yet might’st thou be praised enough of men.

A. C. SWINBURNE.



ON LAMB'S SPECIMENS OF DRAMATIC  
POETS.

I.

IF all the flowers of all the fields on earth  
By wonder-working summer were made one,  
Its fragrance were not sweeter in the sun,  
Its treasure-house of leaves were not more worth  
Than those wherefrom thy light of musing mirth  
Shone, till each leaf whereon thy pens would run  
Breathed life, and all its breath were benison.  
Beloved beyond all names of English birth,  
More dear than mightier memories ; gentlest name  
That ever clothed itself with flower-sweet fame,  
Or linked itself with loftiest names of old,  
By right and might of loving ; I, that am  
Less than the least of these among thy fold,  
Give only thanks for them to thee, Charles Lamb.

II.

So many a year had borne its own bright bees  
And slain them since thy honey-bees were hived,  
John Day, in cells of flower-sweet verse, contrived  
So well with craft of mouldering melodies,



Thy soul perchance in amaranth fields at ease  
 Thought not to hear the sound on earth revived  
 Of summer music from the spring derived  
 When thy song sucked the flower of flowering trees.  
 But thine was not the chance of every day :  
 Time, after many a darkling hour, grew sunny,  
 And light between the clouds ere sunset swam,  
 Laughing, and kissed their darkness all away,  
 When, touched and tasted and approved, thy honey  
 Took subtler sweetness from the lips of Lamb.

A. C. SWINBURNE.



#### A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON.

(PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD MAKERS).

BIRD of the bitter bright grey golden morn  
 Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous years,  
 First of us all and sweetest singer born  
 Whose far shrill note the world of new men  
     hears  
 Cleave the cold shuddering shade as twilight  
     clears ;  
 When song new-born put off the old world's attire  
 And felt its tune on her changed lips expire,  
 Writ foremost on the roll of them that came  
 Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,  
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name !

Alas the joy, the sorrow and the scorn,  
That clothed thy life with hopes and sins and  
fears,  
And gave thee stone for bread and tares for corn,  
And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy starveling  
peers  
Till death clipped close their flight with shame-  
ful shears ;  
Till shifts came short and loves were hard to hire,  
When lift of song nor twitch of twangling wire  
Could buy thee bread or kisses ; when light  
fame  
Spurned like a ball and haled through brake and  
brier,     ‘ ‘ ‘  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name !

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled and torn !  
 Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with light quick  
 tears !

Poor perfect voice, most bright when most forlorn,  
That rings athwart the sea whence no man steers  
Like joy-bells crossed with death-knells in our  
ears !

What far delight has cooled the fierce desire  
That like some ravenous bird was strong to tire  
On that frail flesh and soul consumed with flame,  
But left more sweet than roses to respire  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name !

ENVOI.

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears and fire,  
A harlot was thy nurse, a god thy sire ;

Shame soiled thy song and song assoiled thy  
 shame,  
 But from thy feet now death has washed the mire.  
 Love reads out first, as head of all our quire,  
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name !

A. C. SWINBURNE.



#### ANONYMOUS PLAYS.

YE too, dim watchfires of some darkling hour,  
 Whose fame forlorn time saves not nor  
 proclaims  
 Forever, but forgetfulness defames  
 And darkness and the shadow of death devour,  
 Lift up ye too your light, put forth your power,  
 Let the far twilight feel your soft small flames  
 And smile, albeit night name not even their  
 names,  
 Ghost by ghost passing, flower blown down on  
 flower :  
 That sweet-tongued shadow, like a star's that  
 passed  
 Singing, and light was from its darkness cast  
 To paint the face of Painting fair with praise ; \*  
 And that wherein forefigured smiles the pure  
 Fraternal face of Wordsworth's Elidure  
 Between two child-faced masks of merrier days. †

\* *Doctor Dodypol.*

† *Nobody and Somebody.*

MORE yet and more, and yet we mark not all;  
 The Warning fain to bid fair women heed  
 Its hard brief note of deadly doom and deed ; \*  
 The verse that strewed too thick with flowers the hall  
 Whence Nero watched his fiery festival ; †  
 That iron page wherein men's eyes who read  
 See, bruised and marred between two babes that  
 bleed,  
 A mad red-handed husband's martyr fall ; ‡  
 The scene which crossed and streaked with mirth  
 the strife  
 Of Henry with his sons and witch-like wife ; §  
 And that sweet pageant of the kindly fiend,  
 Who, seeing three friends in spirit and heart made  
 one,  
 Crowned with good hap the true-love wiles he  
 screened  
 In the pleached lanes of pleasant Edmonton. ||

A. C. SWINBURNE.



#### THE LEGEND OF THE ODD VOLUMES.

I.

LONG ago, when such ventures but few under-  
 took,  
 Some one printed and published a capital book,  
 But when all the copies were suitably bound,  
 One copy was missed and could nowhere be found.

* <i>A Warning for Fair</i>	§ <i>Look About You.</i>
<i>Women.</i>	<i>The Merry Devil of</i>
† <i>The Tragedy of Nero.</i>	<i>Edmonton.</i>
‡ <i>A Yorkshire Tragedy.</i>	

Whether stolen or lost was a point never cleared,  
 But the twenty-one volumes had all disappeared.  
 Odd volumes turned up here and there now and  
     then,  
 But the once perfect sette never turned up again.  
     Yet every odd volume, on stall or on shelf,  
     Seemed somehow or other to speak for itself,—  
     “ As a single Odd Volume I’m matchless, but  
         yet  
     The whole twenty-one of us perfect a sette ! ”

## II.

The work, cyclopædic in plan, was designed  
 To embrace every subject then known to mankind ;  
 Thus one volume treated of working appliances,  
 While another was wholly devoted to sciences.  
 Statistics and politics, chemistry, history,  
 Sport, poetry, fiction, jests, magic, and mystery,  
 Law, heraldry, medicine, music, and art,—  
 Some filled a whole volume, some only a part.  
     Yet each of these volumes, on stall or on shelf,  
     Seemed somehow or other to speak for itself,—  
     “ As a single Odd Volume I’m matchless, but  
         yet  
     The whole twenty-one of us perfect a sette ! ”

## III.

These odd volumes were scattered in all sorts of  
     places,  
 In cupboards and cabinets, boxes and cases,

*Legend of the Odd Volumes.* 143

Some were seen in a shop, and some more on a  
stall,  
And one simply filled up a hole in a wall.  
One lay in a lumber chest, out in a shed,  
While another was stowed away under a bed.  
If some had been kept with a fair share of care,  
Some others were certainly worse for hard wear.  
Yet every odd volume, on stall or on shelf,  
Seemed somehow or other to speak for itself,—  
“As a single Odd Volume I’m matchless, but  
yet  
The whole twenty-one of us perfect a sette !”

IV.

Thus year after year they continued to lie,  
Father Time very stupidly passing them by,  
And seeming indifferent what might become of  
them,  
Although his own imprint was plain upon some of  
them ;  
Until one day it struck him that if he could  
bring  
All the volumes together ’twould be a good thing  
So he started collecting, and still he keeps on,  
And the sette will be certainly made up anon.  
For every odd volume, on stall or on shelf,  
Seemed somehow or other to speak for itself,—  
“As a single Odd Volume I’m matchless, but  
yet  
The whole twenty-one of us perfect a sette !”

## v.

Even now Father Time looks with something like  
 pride  
 At his sixteen Odd Volumes all ranged side by side ;  
 But still hurries on lest he seem to neglect  
 Three more he is now on his way to collect.  
 His task, it is plain, will be very soon done,  
 And Time have assembled the whole twenty-one ;  
 Odd volumes no more when together are met  
 The twenty-one volumes which perfect the sette.  
     But the perfected sette won't be laid on the  
     shelf ;  
     Each volume will somehow still speak for  
     itself,—  
     “ When together we perfect a Sette, if you will,  
     But apart each is matchless—an Odd Volume  
     still ! ”

W. M. THOMPSON.

DEC. 1878.



## RELIGIO MEDICI.

## I.

A BOOK? A solemn Temple of the Mind,  
 Dim with sweet smoke, where by the altar  
 dwells  
 Music, sole priestess ; she who in sad shells  
 Murmurs the rune God whispered to the wind  
 Breathed from His throne, which stars and spirits  
 impels.

II.

What sage dreams in this vestibule of heaven ?  
Seer, mystic, saint,—or wandering Earth's lost  
child.  
Babbling quaint heresies whereat God smiled  
Ere Peter wept, or the thief died forgiven :  
Old faith with elder fears half-reconciled ?

III.

Rich-voiced Chaldean, whose majestic speech,  
"Far above singing," wakes the inward ear,  
And haunts, with ancient anthems grave and  
clear,  
The heart's grey cloister, thy ecstatic reach  
Drew some rare splendour from the empyreal  
sphere.

IV.

Ah ! might one grow the Titian of a thought,  
The Handel of a soul's most deep desire,  
In words like thine, whose golden wings aspire,  
Till, purged and flaming in the sun they sought,  
They "live immortal in the arms of fire."

JOHN TODHUNTER.



IN AN OLD LIBRARY.

I.

HERE the still air  
Broods over drowsy nooks  
Of ancient learning : one is 'ware,  
As in a mystic aisle



Of lingering incense, of the balm of books.  
So nard from cerecloths of Egyptian kings  
Solemnised once the sepulchres of Nile.

## II.

Here quietness,  
A ghostly presence, dwells  
Among rich tombs ; here doth possess  
With an ecstatic dread  
The intruder seeking old-world oracles  
In books, centuries of books, centuries of tombs  
That hold the spirits of the crownèd dead.

## III.

Go softly ! Here  
Sleep fair embalméd souls  
In piled-up monuments, in their sere  
And blazoned robes of fame,  
Conquerors of Time. Whisper to these grey  
scrolls,  
Call Poet, Sage, Romancer, Chronicler,  
And every one will answer to his name.

## IV.

Man walks the earth  
The quintessence of dust :  
Books, from the ashes of his mirth  
Madness and sorrow, seem  
To draw the elixir of some rarer gust ;  
Or, like the Stone of Alchemy, transmute  
Life's cheating dross to golden truth of dream.

JOHN TODHUNTER.

## DEAD POETS.

WHERE be they who once would sing,  
Poets passed from wood and dale ?

Faintly, now, we touch the string,  
Faithless, now, we seek the Grail :  
Shakespeare, Spenser, nought avail,

Herrick, England's Oberon,  
Sidney, smitten through his mail,  
Souls of Poets dead and gone !

Ronsard's Roses blossoming  
Long are faded, long are frail ;

Gathered to the heart of Spring  
He that sung the breezy flail.\*

Ah ! could prayer at all prevail,  
These should shine where once they shone,  
These should 'scape the shadowy pale—  
Souls of Poets dead and gone !

What clear air knows Dante's wing ?  
What new seas doth Homer sail ?

By what waters wandering  
Tells Theocritus his tale ?  
Still, when cries the Nightingale,

Singing, sobbing, on and on,  
Her brown feathers seem to veil  
Souls of Poets dead and gone.

Charon, when my ghost doth hail  
O'er Cocytus' waters wan,  
Land me where no storms assail  
Souls of Poets dead and gone.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

\* Joachim du Bellay.

## TO HERODOTUS.

FAR-TRAVELLED coaster of the midland  
     seas,  
 What marvels did those curious eyes behold !  
 Winged snakes, and carven labyrinths of old ;  
 The emerald column raised to Heracles ;  
 King Perseus' shrine upon the Chemmian leas ;  
 Four-footed fishes, decked with gems and gold :  
 But thou didst leave some secrets yet untold,  
 And veiled the dread Osirian mysteries.

And now the golden asphodels among  
 Thy footsteps fare, and to the lordly dead  
 Thou tellest all the stories left unsaid  
 Of secret rites and runes forgotten long,  
 Of that dark folk who ate the Lotus-bread  
 And sang the melancholy Linus-song.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.



## OMAR KHAYYAM.

SAYER of sooth, and Searcher of dim skies !  
 Lover of Song, and Sun, and Summer tide,  
 For whom so many roses bloomed and died ;  
 Tender Interpreter, most sadly wise,  
 Of earth's dumb, inarticulated cries !  
 Time's self cannot estrange us, nor divide.  
 Thy hand still beckons from the garden-side,  
 Through green vine-garlands, when the Winter dies.

*Old Books, Fresh Flowers.* 149

Thy calm lips smile on us, thine eyes are wet ;  
The nightingale's full song sobs all through thine,  
And thine in hers,—part human, part divine !  
Among the deathless gods thy place is set,  
All wise, but drowsy with Life's mingled Wine,  
Laughter and Learning, Passion and Regret.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.



OLD BOOKS, FRESH FLOWERS.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF JOSEPH BAULMIER.)

A LONE, at home, I dwell, content and free :  
The 'soft' May sun comes with his greeting  
fair ;

And, like a lute, my heart thrills tremblingly,  
By the Spring's fingers touched to some sweet air.  
Blessed be Thou, my God, who from my face  
Tak'st the pale cast of thought that weary lowers !  
My chamber walls—my narrow window space  
Hold all most dear to me—old books, fresh  
flowers.

Those trusty friends, that faithful company—  
My books—say, “ Long his slumbers, and we  
wait ! ”

But my flowers murmur, as they look on me,  
“ Nay, never chide him, for he watched so late ! ”  
Brethren and sisters, these of mine ! my room  
Shines fair as with the light of Eden's bowers ;  
The Louvre is not worth my walls abloom  
With all most dear to me—old books, fresh  
flowers.

Beside your shelves I know not weariness,  
My silent-speaking books ! so kind and wise ;  
And fairer seems your yellowed parchment dress  
Than gay morocco, to my loving eyes.  
Dear blossoms, of the humble hermit's choice,  
In sweetest communing what joys are ours !  
To you I listen, and with you rejoice ;  
For all I love is here—old books, fresh flowers.

Men are unlovely, but their works are fair—  
Ay, men are evil, but their works are good :  
The clay hath perished, and the soul laid bare  
Shines from their books in heavenly solitude.  
Light on each slender stem pure blossoms rest,  
Like angel envoys of the Heavenly powers ;  
Of all earth's maidens these are first and best,  
And all I love is here—old books, fresh flowers.

A double harvest crowns my granary :  
From all light loves and joys my soul takes flight ;  
My books are blossoms, and their bee am I,  
And God's own volumes are my blossoms bright.  
These and no other bosom friends are mine ;  
With them I pass my best, my calmest hours ;  
These only lead me to the light Divine,  
And all I love is here : old books, fresh flowers.

My books are tombs where wit and wisdom sleep,  
Stored full with treasure of the long ago ;  
My tender buds, that dews of spring-tide steep,  
Like shining mirrors of the future show.

*Betty Barnes, the Book-Burner.* 151

The present is so sad ! . . . this dark to-day  
Like skies with thunder charged above us lowers :  
Ah ! of the past—the future—speak alway,  
Tell me of naught but these . . . old books,  
fresh flowers.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.



BETTY BARNES, THE BOOK-BURNER.

WHERE is that baleful maid  
Who Shakspeare's quartos shred ?  
Whose slow diurnal raid  
The flames with *Stephen* fed ?  
Where is *Duke Humphry* sped ?  
Where is the *Henries'* book ?  
They are all vanishèd  
With Betty Barnes the Cook.

And now her ghost, dismayed,  
In woful ways doth tread—  
(Though once the grieving shade  
Sir Walter visited)—  
Where culprits sore bestead,  
In dank or fiery nook,  
Repent there deeds of dread  
With Betty Barnes the Cook.

There Bagford's evil trade  
Is duly punishèd ;  
There fierce the flames have played  
Round Caliph Omar's head ;

The biblioclastic dead  
Have diverse pains to brook,  
'Mid rats and rainpools led  
With Betty Barnes the Cook.

Caxton ! be comforted,  
For those who wronged thee—look ;  
They break affliction's bread  
With Betty Barnes the Cook.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.



BALLAD: BEFORE MY BOOKSHELVES.

NOW that the swallow again we see,  
Now daisy-burthened is every mead  
And burthened the air with bird-minstrely—  
What book shall I take in my nook to read ?  
Will a huge folio serve my need  
From yonder musty and slumberous row ?  
All the May-morn on *him* shall I feed—  
*Or the rose-bright tales of Boccaccio ?*

Stay ! if I took him, asleep should I be  
In a moment, and even the birds would speed  
To their nests, quick-stinting their melody  
As though, all-timeless, dark night were freed.  
Pass on ! Yon history ! Do you plead  
For a hearing ? Mighty of voice, I trow !  
Shall I thrive on some old-world blood-bright  
deed,  
*Or the rose-bright tales of Boccaccio ?*

The sweet heaven-showers for the daisied lea  
Are better than showers from heroes that bleed ;  
And the shriek of the clarion would slay the glee  
Of the birds that love but the shepherd's reed—  
Ah ! and the lute of the singer ! Have heed !  
Here are the poets, with leaves that glow  
Lovelier than lindens' : take this, indeed ?—  
*Or the rose-bright tales of Boccaccio !*

ENVOI.

Birds, I am coming. Do you proceed  
With your lyrics ; a lovelier song I know.  
Look, here is a *Swinburne*, and here—base greed !  
*Are the rose-bright tales of Boccaccio !*

NELSON RICH TYERMAN.



TO MY PAPER-KNIFE.

THOU art old, my Paperknife, old and dented !  
Yet hast served me well, since in Eighteen-  
sev'nty  
I first saw thee, left in the railway-carriage,  
Left by a maiden,  
Who, beside her mother demurely seated,  
Glanced in turn at *Telegraph*, *Times* and *Stan-*  
*dard*,  
Or, above the *Telegraph*, *Times* or *Standard*,  
Let a look wander  
Shyly forth 'neath eyelashes long and raven.



She, the unknown, alighted, but thee she left  
 there,  
 Paperknife ! Since then thou hast cut the leaves of  
     Homer and Virgil,  
 Lycophron, Sidonius Apollinaris,  
 Rhodian Apollonius, Egyptian Hermes,  
 Hegel and the twain Metamorphosistae,  
     Darwin and Ovid.

R. J. WALKER.



FOR THE SHELLEY CENTENARY.

**I**N Christ's own town did fools of old condemn  
     A sinless maid to burn in felon's fire ;  
 She looked above : she spake from out the pyre  
 To skies that made a star for Bethlehem,  
 When lo ! the flames touching her garment's hem  
     Blossomed to roses—warbled like a lyre—  
     Made every fagot-twigg a scented brier,  
 And crowned her with a rose-bud diadem.\*

Brothers in Shelley, we this morn are strong :  
     Our Heart of Hearts hath conquered—con-  
     quered those  
 Once fain to work the world and Shelley wrong :  
     Their pyre of hate now bourgeons with the rose :  
     Their every fagot, now a sweet-brier, throws  
 Love's breath upon the breeze of Shelley's song.

THEODORE WATTS.

\* See the story of the Maid of Bethlehem in Sir John  
 Mandeville's Travels.

## COLERIDGE.

I SEE thee pine like her in golden story  
 Who, in her prison, woke and saw, one day,  
 The gates thrown open—saw the sunbeams play,  
 With only a web 'tween her and summer's glory ;  
 Who, when that web—so frail, so transitory  
 It broke before her breath—had fallen away,  
 Saw other webs and others rise for aye  
 Which kept her prisoned till her hair was hoary.  
 Those songs half-sung that yet were all-divine—  
 That woke Romance, the queen, to reign afresh—  
 Had been but preludes from that lyre of thine,  
 Could thy rare spirit's wings have pierced the  
     mesh  
 Spun by the wizard who compels the flesh,  
 But lets the poet see how heav'n can shine.

THEODORE WATTS.



## THE DEATH OF MARLOWE.

'TIS Marlowe falls ! That last lunge rent  
     asunder  
 Our lyre of spirit and flesh, wild Marlowe's life,  
 Whose chords seemed strung by earth and heav'n  
     at strife,  
 Yet ever strung to beauty above or under !  
 Heav'n kens of Man, but still the stars can blunder  
     If Fate's hand guided yonder villain's knife  
 Through that rare brain, so teeming, daring, rife  
 With all that makes us sing,—our love and wonder.

Or was it Chance?—

Shakespeare—who art supreme

O'er man and men, yet sharest Marlowe's sight

To pierce the clouds that hide the inhuman  
height

Where man and men and gods and all that seem

Are Nature's mutterings in her changeful dream—

Come, read the runes these bloody streamlets write!

THEODORE WATTS.



TO MY WIFE: WITH A COPY OF MY  
POEMS.

I CAN write no stately proem  
As a prelude to my lay;  
From a poet to a poem  
I would dare to say.

For if of these fallen petals  
One to you seem fair,  
Love will waft it till it settles  
On your hair.

And when wind and winter harden  
All the loveless land,  
It will whisper of the garden,  
You will understand.

OSCAR WILDE.

WITH A COPY OF "THE HOUSE OF  
POMEGRANATES."

GO, little book,  
To him who, on a lute with horns of pearl,  
Sang of the white feet of the Golden Girl :  
And bid him look  
Into thy pages : it may hap that he  
May find that golden maidens dance through thee.

OSCAR WILDE.



MY BOOKS.

I.

THE winter evening closes blank and stern,  
The flickering fire illumines with dancing light  
My narrow chamber walls, and as the night  
Draws on to morn, my lamp half down I turn.  
Amid the shadows dimly I discern  
My books, dumb comrades, gay and erudite,  
From folios brown to pamphlets thin and white,  
Well nigh the only friends from whom I learn.  
Full half of them would be by busy men  
Rejected with a smile, but I—I move  
Too seldom down the volumes that improve.  
Give me the work of a forgotten pen,  
Wild tales of Prester John or of the Cham,  
Or emblem quaintnesses from Amsterdam.

## II.

Oh, happy he who, weary of the sound  
 Of throbbing life, can shut his study door,  
 Like Heinsius, on it all, to find a store  
 Of peace that elsewhere is never found !  
 Such happiness is mine, when all around  
 My dear dumb friends in groups of three or four  
 Command my soul to linger on the shore  
 Of those fair realms where they reign monarchs  
 crowned.  
 To-day the strivings of the world are nought,  
 For I am in a land that glows with God,  
 And I am in a path by angels trod.  
 Dost ask what book creates such heavenly thought ?  
 Then know that I with Dante soar afar,  
 Till earth shrinks slowly to a tiny star.

J. WILLIAMS.



WITH FITZGERALD'S "OMAR KHAYYAM."

EIGHT centuries unheeded by the West !  
 Now loved within our hearts ; whose daily  
 strait  
 Is still to war with wavering unrest,  
 To ask in vain, for aye importunate,  
 The ceaseless " WHY " ? whereof we ever wait  
 The answering " BECAUSE," which ringing  
 true  
 Would solve the mystery of Life and Fate.  
 Omar ! the peace you sought we find in you.

*Fitzgerald's "Omar Khayyam."* 159

The fabled Paradise wherein the blest  
Lie lotus-eating, lulled in languorous state,  
Measured by later reasonable test  
Seems but at best a doubtful opiate.  
Life is but labour, always to create  
New aims to strive for, and new things to do.  
Could Heaven itself the stress of life abate?  
Omar ! the peace you sought we find in you.

Incurious, we cease the hopeless quest,  
For nobler he who thus can subjugate  
His reckless will, than he with fears opprest,  
Who cries amid his doubts, "Alláh is great !"  
"Each his own heaven or hell !" why hesitate ?  
To-day is ours, to-morrow keeps the clue  
To the great secret, still inviolate.  
Omar ! the peace you sought we find in you.

Shall Fate or we cry to Life's game, "check-mate" !  
Nay, wise men draw it, fools defeat pursue ;  
Unconquered, though unconquering, as we wait.  
Omar ! the peace you sought we find in you.

G. W.



## "KEATS TOOK SNUFF."

"Keats took snuff. . . . It has been established by the worthy editorial research of Mr. Buxton Forman."

S O "Keats took snuff"? A few more years,  
 When we are dead and famous—eh?  
 Will they record our pipes and beers,  
 And if we smoked cigars or clay?  
 Or will the world cry "Quantum suff."  
 To tattle such as "Keats took snuff"?

Perhaps some chronicler would wish  
 To know what whisky we preferred,  
 And if we ever dined on fish,  
 Or only took the joint and bird?  
 Such facts are quite as worthy stuff,  
 Good chronicler, as "Keats took snuff."

You answer: "But, if you were Keats—"  
 Tut! never mind your buts and ifs.  
 Of little men record their meats,  
 Their drinks, their troubles and their tiffs.  
 Of the great dead there's gold enough  
 To spare us such as "Keats took snuff."

Well, go your ways, you little folk,  
 Who polish up the great folks' lives;  
 Record the follies that they spoke,  
 And paint their squabbles with their wives.  
 Somewhere, if ever ghosts be gruff,  
 I trust some Keats will "give you snuff."

## OLD BOOKS.

I MUST confess I love old books !  
 The dearest, too, perhaps most dearly ;  
 Thick, clumsy tomes, of antique looks,  
 In pigskin covers fashioned queerly.

Clasped, chained, or thonged, stamped quaintly  
 too,  
 With figures wondrous strange, or holy  
 Men and women, and cherubs, few  
 Might well from owls distinguish duly.

I love black-letter books that saw  
 The light of day at least three hundred  
 Long years ago ; and look with awe  
 On works that live, so often plundered.

I love the sacred dust the more  
 It clings to ancient lore, enshrining  
 Thoughts of the dead, renowned of yore,  
 Embalmed in books, for age declining.

Fit solace, food, and friends more sure,  
 To have around one, always handy,  
 When sinking spirits find no cure  
 In news, election brawls, or brandy.

In these old books, more soothing far  
 Than Balm of Gilead or Nepenthè,  
 I seek an antidote for care—  
 Of which most men indeed have plenty.



“Five hundred times at least,” I’ve said—  
My wife assures me—“I would never  
Buy more old books ;” yet lists are made,  
And shelves are lumbered more than ever.

Ah ! that our wives could only see  
How well the money is invested  
In these old books, which seem to be  
By them, alas ! so much detested.

There’s nothing hath enduring youth,  
Eternal newness, strength unfailing,  
Except old books, old friends, old truth,  
That’s ever battling—still prevailing.

’Tis better in the past to live  
Than grovel in the present vilely,  
In clubs, and cliques, where placemen hive,  
And faction hums, and dolts rank highly.

To be enlightened, counselled, led,  
By master minds of former ages,  
Come to old books—consult the dead—  
Commune with silent saints and sages.

Leave me, ye gods ! to my old books—  
Polemics yield to sects that wrangle—  
Vile “parish politics” to folks  
Who love to squabble, scheme, and jangle.

Dearly beloved old pigskin tomes !  
Of dingy hue—old bookish darlings !  
Oh, cluster ever round my rooms,  
And banish strifes, disputes, and snarlings

## TO A CHINA COLLECTOR.

YOU'RE proud of your fine old china,  
 I'm proud of my volumes rare ;  
 Some people may call us crazy,  
 But what do you and I care ?  
 Through the quaint little shops and gloomy,  
 Where curious trifles are sold,  
 In the depths of ancient cities  
 You'll hunt till you're grey and old.

And the bookshelves I will ransack  
 In many a grimy store ;  
 Yes, I as a keen detective  
 Will, down from roof to floor,  
 Haul folios huge and stately,  
 Written in bygone ages  
 By minstrels, who as they penn'd love-lays  
 Dropped tears on the parchment pages.

And I'll longingly look for the miniatures,  
 Those dear little dainty books,  
 Prettily deck'd in purple and gold,  
 That one reads in the grass-green nooks.  
 I mean the kind that are richly stored  
 With beautiful, pure romances,  
 And the mystical song of the gales and seas  
 That a sorrowful heart entrances.



## THE LITERARY NOVELTY.

HERE'S to the novel without any plot,  
 Which brings to the mind calm delight ;  
 The scholarly novel that interests not,  
 But structurally still is all right.  
 Then send the rich sterilised water around,  
 Till each brimming glass doth run o'er ;  
 We'll drink to the tale in which no plot is found  
 Till we can't drink another drop more !

Dickens, and Thackeray, and Sir Walter Scott,  
 And others too numerous to mention,  
 Each one of them used a most palpable plot  
 As a cheap way to hold the attention :  
 We know now the plot to be thoroughly wrong,  
 Analysis these fellows lacked ;  
 So drink to the hope that it may not be long  
 Till readers shall find out this fact !

The deadly romance, that dire pitfall of youth,  
 Oh, give me the photograph dear,  
 For I would have fiction as truthful as truth,  
 And never a smile or a tear.

On the plain commonplace should the novelist  
 dwell,  
 The common and everyday topic ;  
 In a way realistic he even should tell  
 Of the beautiful point microscopic.

Then here's to the utterly tasteless and tame,  
 The sleepy, the vapid, the flat ;  
 And here's to each author who builds us the same  
 With a kodak concealed in his hat !

Then we'll drink, as the sterilised waters go  
round,  
To the novel that fosters a snore ;  
To the plotless, the dull, but with principle sound,  
Till we can't drink another drop more.



AFTER MANY DAYS.

" I REALLY am obliged to you for bringing  
back my book,  
It moves me much to look whereon I thought no  
more to look ;  
It 'minds me of the early time when it was lent to  
you,  
When life was young and hope was fair, and this  
old book was new.  
" How well does memory recall the gilt that on it  
shone  
The day I saw it, coveted, and bought it for my  
own ;  
And vividly I recollect you called around that day,  
Admired it, then borrowed it, and carried it away !  
" And now it comes to me again across the lapse  
of time,  
Wearing the somewhat battered look of those  
beyond their prime.  
Old book, you need a rest—but ere you're laid  
upon the shelf,  
Just try and hang together till I read you through  
myself."

## THE YOUNG WIFE'S PLAINT.

NAY, seems it not most wondrous queer  
 That he should love to tarry here ;  
 Prefer this "den" to boudoir nest  
 Where downy pillows coax to rest,  
*Chaise-longue* and Turkish cigarette ?  
 A stranger compound ne'er was met  
 Than this same creature man, I ween.  
 What's this dull calf to velvet sheen ?  
 Who dares assert that this pert minx  
 On yellow page in dingy inks  
 Is half so fair as I am, see !  
 What woman would not angry be  
 With man who turns from living charms  
 To worship some dead beauty's arms ?  
 Why should he care of smiles to read  
 When mine so sweet are his indeed ?  
 What's *Maintenon* or this *L'Enclos*  
 Or Gwynn to him, I'd like to know ?  
 What stupid fad, what silly rage  
 To *love* such trash of bygone age !  
 Why, as I live, these letters mean  
 Just fifteen hundred seventeen.  
 Nay, 'tis a shame to buy such stuff  
 When nice new books are cheap enough !  
 Knew I how soon I'd be forgot  
 I ne'er had wedded him, God wot.  
 Vile, musty books, in dead skins bound—  
 Faugh, what an odour lingers round !  
 'Tis shameful taste, indeed it is ;  
 But hear my vow, ye loves of his,

In spite of all your dingy looks—  
Apologies for decent books—  
I'll win him back, ye mildewed crew,  
*I'll make him think I love you too!*



OLD AND NEW.

OLD friends are best, the poets sing.  
No others are so staunch and true.  
New friends in trouble will not cling  
As closely as the old friends do.

Old books are best without a doubt.  
Their charms can never fail to win.  
New books, however bright without,  
Have not their power to please within.

Old wines are best, as all aver,  
And often are their praises sung.  
They're rich and rare, have power to stir  
The pulses of both old and young.

Friends, wine and books have charms to please  
When age its ivy round them curls ;  
But we've no use for such as these :  
Old jokes, old clothes, old ballet girls.



## THE FUTURE OF THE CLASSICS.

NO longer, O scholars, shall Plautus  
Be taught us.

No more shall professors be partial  
To Martial.

No ninny

Will stop playing "shinney"  
For Pliny.

Not even the veriest Mexican Greaser  
Will stop to read Cæsar.

No true son of Erin will leave his potato  
To list to the love-lore of Ovid or Plato.

Old Homer,

That hapless old roamer,

Will ne'er find rest 'neath collegiate dome or  
Anywhere else. As to Seneca,

Any cur

Safely may snub him, or urge ill  
Effects from the reading of Virgil.

Cornelius Nepos

Won't keep us

Much longer from pleasure's light errands—  
Nor Terence.

The irreverent now may all scoff in ease

At the shade of poor old Aristophanes.

And moderns it now doth behoove in all

Ways to despise poor old Juvenal ;

And to chivvy

Livy.

The class-room hereafter will miss a row  
Of eager young students of Cicero.

The 'longshore man—yes, and the dock-rat, he's  
Down upon Socrates.  
And what'll  
Induce us to read Aristotle?  
We shall fail in  
Our duty to Galen.  
No tutor henceforward shall rack us  
To construe old Horatius Flaccus.  
We have but a wretched opinion  
Of Mr. Justinian.  
In our classical pabulum mix we no wee sop  
Of Æsop.  
Our balance of intellect asks for no ballast  
From Sallust.  
With feminine scorn no fair Vassar-bred lass at us  
Shall smile if we own that we cannot read Tacitus.  
No admirer shall ever now wreath with begonias  
The bust of Suetonius.  
And so, if you follow me,  
We'll have to cut Ptolemy.  
Besides, it would just be considered facetious  
To look at Lucretius.  
And you can  
Not go in society if you read Lucan.  
And we cannot have any fun  
Out of Xenophon.





TO M——, WITH A COPY OF "THE  
PETERKIN PAPERS."

A BOSTON girl prefers a set of volumes that  
are uniform,  
In Syriac, Chaldeaic, Sanskrit, Arabic, or cunei-  
form,  
For these will test her palæontological ability,  
And not insult her culture by superfluous facility.  
She loves a scientific pedant, or, to use a synonym,  
A specimen with printed name and label fair to pin  
on him.  
Alas! I fear she will despise a book without a  
mystery,  
That never once alludes to Art or Mediæval  
History;  
But as she is compelled each day to recognise and  
meet her kin,  
I trust she will accept at least this tale of Mrs.  
Peterkin.



#### THE BOOKWORM'S STORY.

THRO' Papyrus with wisdom stored  
In ancient days my way I bored;  
Ah, mem'ry of that far-off time,  
And succulence of Nilus' slime!  
'Twas nature's paper bred my kind  
And nurs'd fat worms of rev'rent mind!

The giants we before the flood,  
With reptiles bred in Egypt's mud !—  
Lost kindred mine that went to ash  
With Alexandria's lore and trash.  
You'd scarce believe the diet strange  
Thro' which the Bookworm now must range.  
Cotton paper was plaguy stuff,  
And linen rag was bad enough ;  
But things have come to such a pass  
That paper's made of straw and grass !  
Esparto, ramie, young bamboo,  
All these and more I've eaten thro' !—  
But soft ; for now I must relate  
Th' apotheosis of my fate :  
Dyspeptic 'mid these modern books,  
I sought old haunts and shady nooks,  
Intent on ancient tomes forgot  
That oft had been knocked down by lot ;  
But mov'd—by what I cannot tell—  
Unless its most unusual smell—  
I tried a book of goodly size,  
The hardest it of all my tries !  
Away I bored, but I was floored,  
Ye Gods ! the thing was made of *board*.  
Yes, *wood* must now their paper give—  
Stuff that ye may not eat, and live !  
In fearful pain I lay me down,  
And dreamt as people do who drown :

I dreamt of Egypt's sunny clime,  
The Bookworm's ancient halcyon time,

Of modern ink the first time quaffed,  
 And once more rued the fiery draught.  
 This strange admixture seems to be  
 Much like the mortal's *eau-de-vie* ;  
 It makes one gay and feel so queer,  
 I oft have crow'd like chanticleer !  
 Once more 'mid cobwebs, dry-rot, dust,  
 I bored thro' Gutenberg and Fust.

On Caxton fed and Pynson, too,  
 And many an Elzevir drilled thro' ;  
 So dreaming, I quite vainly tried  
 To rouse myself—I nearly died !  
 For SOMETHING held me in its thrall  
 That made me grow both stout and tall !  
 Then I awoke, and with a shock—  
 It was the hand of ELLIOT STOCK ;  
 I rubb'd my eyes and gaz'd around,  
 Books lin'd the walls from ceil to ground.  
 Thro' many I had bor'd my way !  
 You'll scarce believe me when I say  
 The knowledge I had eaten thro'  
 Straight to my brain now upward flew !  
 New life and purpose thro' me ran—  
 I found myself a living man !  
 STOCK moved his hand, and, smiling, said,  
 " Interpret now the mighty dead !  
 The world we live in disbelieves  
 In ancient books and yellow leaves :  
 Arise ! unlock the BOOKWORM'S store,  
 And tell us of the books of yore ! "

He gave me paper, quills, and ink,  
While I could only stare and blink ;  
Command and will were in his eye,  
As he resum'd, without reply :  
" Once foe of books, as friend now live  
To all who need, good book-lore give ;  
Then you we'll hail as chief book-lover,  
And place your portrait on the cover.'

So here THE BOOKWORM toiling spins,  
To expiate his many sins.



THE NEW LEARNING.

ON Psychological Phenomena she spoke out with  
decision  
About the Ancient Mystics and the modern ones  
as well ;  
She discussed the Stellar Theory and the Tripartite  
Division,  
And the character of Shelley, and the Theo-  
sophic Smell.  
Anon she touched on Politics, on Egypt's vanished  
splendours,  
On Aryans, Euripides, and Rousseau's moral  
tone ;  
She quoted scraps of German, using freedom in  
her genders,  
And she mentioned Renan's latest with an accent  
all her own.

I listened and I marvelled, for I've scholars known  
 in plenty  
 Who've struggled all a long life through to  
 master one domain,  
 And here I found a maiden fond of dancing, pretty,  
 twenty,  
 Whose province was all learning, and who found  
 it smooth and plain.

I loved her, and to love her was a liberal education ;  
 I shyly dared to ask her how I might grow wise  
 as she.  
 I was but a humble Wrangler, so I spoke with  
 trepidation :  
 She marked it, and she sweetly smiled and thus  
 encouraged me :

“Oh, the matter's very simple ! You have but to  
 do as I did :  
 Go and hear extension lecturers, peruse the  
 monthly Stead ;  
 Join a Furnivall Society or two, by them be guided,  
 Of proper names and tendencies repeat all you  
 hear said.

“Two lectures on the Cosmic Soul and three on  
 Man's Relations,  
 One on Dramatic Genius in England, Greece  
 and Rome,  
 A Tudor Exhibition and a Story of the Nations,  
 With a visit paid to Stratford or the Robert  
 Elsmere home,

“ Will make you almost perfect in the ways of the  
New Learning,  
That teaches us to talk of things we scarcely  
know by name ;  
But you mustn't waste your time on books, like  
persons undiscerning,  
Except about the washing bills and sins of men  
of fame.

“ ‘ Browning ? Read him ? ’ I've not read him,  
but I've heard a well-known critic  
Give his views about ‘ Sordello ’ to the Ladies’  
Culture Classes ;  
And a magic-lantern picture at last Tuesday’s  
Analytic,  
Showed the meeting ’twixt the lover and the wife  
in ‘ Pippa Passes.’

“ Now try this plan, and quickly ’mid the wisdom  
of the ages,  
You'll learn the true enjoyment that the love of  
culture brings,  
Find our Being's real inwardness before you in the  
pages  
Of the Shilling Oxford Primer on the Origin of  
Things.”

*From the “ St. James' Gazette.”*



## TO MY BOOKS.

WITH unaffected gratitude I gaze  
 Around upon those silent sons of thought,  
 From time's far depths and far-off regions brought;  
 Ready with many tongues and lore and lays  
 To minister to my capricious days!  
 Chambers with golden sentences enwrought,  
 They open liberal-hearted soon as sought,  
 Nor claim nor heed my inefficient praise.  
 Oh, kind companions! My mentors true,  
 My playmates, minstrels, mortal and divine!  
 I think he would die happier who knew  
 His thoughts, deposited in some small shrine  
 Like yours, should find a resting-place by you,  
 There with undying light, though faint, to shine.

*From "The Afterglow."*

A PLEA FOR THE BURIAL OF PALEY,  
DECEASED.

A NEW "SONNET DEDICATED TO LIBERTY."

PALEY, thou shouldst be buried at this hour;  
 Thou hast been longtime dead, yet still the  
 blight  
 Of thy chill touch lies on the Infinite,  
 With'ring it up t' the size and shape of our  
 Vain finite minds. Oh that we had the power  
 To bury thee deep in oblivion's sure  
 Unechoing vault! that Faith, fair, free and pure

Might grow, undwarfed by memory of thy sour  
And soul-less wranglings at the tomb of Christ ;  
Thy calm dissection of the living hearts  
Of martyr, prophet, and evangelist,  
Thy worldly wisdom, which with curious arts  
Of biassed logic has so perfectly  
Embalmed a murdered Christianity.

"CAMBRIDGE REVIEW."

"READING."

MASTER.

SCHOLAR, thy books were all untouched to-  
day,  
The night, no candle in thy rooms was burning ;  
I fear thou treadest sluggishly the way  
That leads to learning.

SCHOLAR.

Master, the sun is shining in the skies,  
My books, forgive me, how can I be heeding ?  
Upon the woods the autumn glory lies—  
Yet I was reading.

MASTER.

Scholar, above us I can see no sun :  
I see no glory where the leaves are falling :  
Scholar, thy reading waits thee to be done ;  
The Schools are calling.



## SCHOLAR.

Master, a way there is thou hast not guessed ;  
 All wandering from books, is not receding ;  
 For now I live, leave thou to me the rest—  
 I have been reading.

Of Life not Aristotle holds the keys ;  
 Kant cannot heal the heart that lies a-bleeding ;  
 Nature hath spread her book beneath the trees—  
 I have been reading.

Love walked beside me—prate thou not of books—  
 One fairer far than any sage was leading  
 My footsteps, master mine, and in her looks  
 I have been reading.

"OXFORD MAGAZINE."

## IN A LIBRARY.

TREAD softly here, as ye would tread  
 In presence of the honoured dead,  
 With reverent step and low-bowed head.

Speak low—as low as ye would speak  
 Before some saint of grandeur meek  
 Whose favour ye would humbly seek.

Within these walls the very air  
 Seems weighted with a fragrance rare,  
 Like incense burned at evening prayer.

Here may we sit and converse hold  
With those whose names in ages old  
Were in the book of fame enrolled.

Here under poet's power intense  
We leave the world of sound and sense,  
Where mortals strive with problems dense,

And mount to realms where fancy, free,  
Above our poor humanity,  
Roams in a joyous ecstasy.

Or if through history's maze we tread,  
The hero, patriot, long since dead,  
Whose great heart for his country bled,

Seems once again to work and fight  
In superstition's darkest night  
For God, his fellows, and the right.

Enough ! mere words can never tell  
The influence of the grateful spell  
Which seems among these books to dwell.



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*As the poems (excepting the Anonymous group at the end)  
are arranged, with the writers' signatures, in alpha-  
betical rotation, an index of authors is unnecessary.*

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